LETTERS

ON

Different Subjects,

In Four Volumes;

Amongſt which are interſpers'd the

ADVENTURES

OF

ALPHONSO,

After the Deſtruction of *Liſbon.*

By the Author of *The unfortunate Mother's Advice to her abſent Daughters.*

VOL. III.

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M.DCCLXVII.

PREFACE.

THE motive for publishing these Lectures by subscription has already been explained in the Preface to the two Latin volumes, that were printed last year; but that declaration was given with small confidence, by supposing every one would, by supporting every undertaking encouragement, or favour, as much as possible, the advancement of the generous virtue which made such a thing necessary. The

BODLEIAN
11 NOV 1961

THE

PREFACE.

THE motive for publiſhing theſe Letters by ſubſcription has already been related in the Preface to the two firſt volumes, that were printed laſt year, but that relation was given in the moſt cautious manner, by ſuppreſſing every aggravating circumſtance, to ſave, as much as poſſible, the character of the gentleman whoſe conduct made ſuch a ſtep neceſſary: No

part of this gentleman's behaviour to the perſon concern'd, gave him a right to expect ſuch lenity, which has been returned by the groſſeſt miſrepreſentation of her actions and deſigns; with a view of making her appear in a light that might induce ſome perſons of the higheſt rank to withdraw the honour they had done her, in giving the ſanction of their names, to forward the ſucceſs of her laudable intention: Theſe endeavours fail'd; but the untruths that have been induſtriouſly propagated on this occaſion, added to innumerable injuries before received, might be thought a ſufficient juſtification for her publiſhing a hiſtory that would be far from redounding to the honour of the man that muſt make the princi-

pal

pal figure in it: Such a hiſtory, with many atteſted facts of a moſt extraordinary nature, authenticated by many original letters, ſhe has by her, but that ſpirit of moderation, and true benevolence, which has guided all her actions towards this gentleman, ſtill reſtrains her from retaliating the repeated injuries received from him. The deſire of revenge makes not a part of her compoſition; to return good for evil is one of her greateſt pleaſures, and ſhe has long enjoyed the happineſs reſulting from the practice of this virtue; but it would, perhaps, be carrying it to a blamable exceſs, to ſuffer in ſilence the continuance of thoſe diſhonourable and unjuſt methods that have been taken to place her in a light

unworthy the protection of the great and good; and therefore if theſe ungenerous meaſures ſhould be ſtill purſued, it may be incumbent on her to give the world a hiſtory of the whole truth, with the riſe, motives for, and progreſs of thoſe injuries ſhe has for ſo many years patiently ſuſtain'd. Few things would be more painful to her than ſuch a neceſſity, as ſhe could not help feeling moſt ſenſibly the wounds of every character that muſt ſuffer by an eclarciſſment of this nature. She wiſhes to leave all who have been cauſeleſly her enemies to the puniſhment of their own reflections, but if forced by reiterated injuries, to make uſe of the power in her hands to vindicate herſelf, ſhe cannot doubt being juſtified

by

by the ſenſible and virtuous part of mankind, who will be candid enough to acquit her of any blame in a proceeding, which may thus at length be made indiſpenſibly neceſſary.

At preſent let it ſuffice to ſay, that the previous notice ſhe gave to the gentleman, at whoſe earneſt requeſt this debt * was contracted, of her intention to raiſe a ſubſcription by the publication of her memoirs, unleſs he would immediately diſcharge it, or give ſecurity for ſo doing, was with a view of urging him to an act of juſtice, to which, after ſo long a time had elapſed, it might have been difficult to have compel'd him, eſpecially as ſhe had voluntarily

* See the Preface to the Firſt Vol.

rily paid the intereſt many years, knowing that the expences of educating a young family, were to the full as large as his income could then ſupport: She did not believe that he could have deliberately obliged her to carry ſuch a deſign into execution, and waited two months, expecting that he would prudently reſolve to make ſuch a ſtep unneceſſary: Being diſappointed in that expectation, ſhe reviſed her memoirs, but found they contained ſo many incidents of a kind which a benevolent heart muſt ſhrink with reluctance from the thought of expoſing to public view, that the manuſcript was once more laid by, and in its ſtead, the Letters, theſe four volumes contain

tain, propoſed to the public for a ſubſcription.

It has given her concern to hear by the publiſher, that ſome of the ſubſcribers, expecting the hiſtory of her own life, have expreſſed diſſatisfaction at their diſappointment; theſe ſhe begs leave to refer to the words of her firſt printed propoſals, viz. "Letters on different ſubjects, interſperſed with *ſome parts* of her own hiſtory." —The conditions propoſed having been literally fulfill'd, no blame, ſhe hopes, will be imputed to her for ſuch a diſappointment. Her wiſhes, indeed, were expreſs'd that theſe Letters might prove uſeful or entertaining; but ſhe preſumed not to ſay they

they would be found ſo, and honeſtly acknowledged that her motive for their publication was to raiſe a ſum for a particular purpoſe, promiſed to be related; that motive now explain'd, ſhe flatters herſelf, will be allow'd a ſufficient excuſe for any apparent impropriety there may be in her raiſing a ſubſcription of this kind, and that all thoſe who have obligingly done her the honour to contribute to the ſucceſs of her deſign, will kindly accept theſe Letters, incorrect as they are (being chiefly friendly correſpondences not originally intended for the preſs) without regretting the diſappointment of a curioſity that could not be gratified but at the expence of many characters that would give pain to every bene-

benevolent breaſt, and which ſhe could not, without extreme regret, be forced to the diſagreeable neceſſity of laying open to the World.

An exact account of the ſeveral diſburſements in this publication, with the application of the reſidue of the ſum, ariſing from the ſubſcription, may be ſeen at Mr. Etheridge's, Painter, in Oxford-Road, for the ſatisfaction of any ſubſcriber, who chooſes to inſpect it.

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LETTER I.

To Mr. F———.

WITH inexpreſſible pleaſure, my dear Friend, I received the account of your amiable daughter's recovery; my heart felt all that I knew your's muſt ſuffer while the event remain'd doubtful, and trembled at the apprehenſion of a misfortune that all your philoſophy would ſcarce have been equal to, if heaven had reſumed this invaluable gift, by taking to itſelf the beſt of daughters,

juſt as her ripened reaſon, and improved virtues had rendered her not only the agreeable companion, but the boſom friend of the tendereſt of fathers. The danger being paſt we may now look back with calmneſs on what was lately beheld with terror—On this retroſpect, I am pleaſed to hear you own that ſomething more than bare philoſophy was neceſſary to ſupport the mind under ſo ſevere a tryal—No man has more Strength of reaſon, more firmneſs of reſolution than yourſelf, yet here you have evidently found their united force too weak to ſuſtain your ſinking ſpirits.

While labouring under the daily apprehenſion of loſing the deareſt bleſſing of your life, I beheld, in

ſilent

ſilent concern, to what a ſtate of anarchy your thoughts were reduced, how uncertain were your conjectures! how doubtful to yourſelf appeared the truth of thoſe opinions you have long reſolutely maintained! and I am now rejoiced that the recollection of what then paſſed in your diſtracted breaſt has convinced you that the belief of a future ſtate of exiſtence is neceſſary to the happineſs of the preſent.——This conviction will unavoidably lead you to a more ſtrict examination of the arguments on both ſides the queſtion, and I cannot doubt but that will be followed by an acknowledgement that thoſe for the immortality of the ſoul are much ſtronger, and more reaſonable than all the imagined proofs you have been

accuſtomed to urge in contradiction to ſo deſirable an hypotheſis.

You are the only Perſon I ever heard attempt to argue againſt the immortal exiſtence of the mind, the tenor of whoſe actions was not of a kind that muſt naturally inſpire terror at the thought of being call'd to a future account.

Thoſe alſo who reject chriſtianity are, generally ſpeaking, perſons whoſe lives are condemned by the purity of its precepts, and who can more eaſily perſuade themſelves to diſbelieve the one, than rectify the other:—With you, my friend, the caſe is widely different——All the known actions of your life, either in your public, or

or private capacity, literally prove you one of the moſt perfect chriſtians I have met with, and it is impoſſible but the belief of a future ſtate muſt afford you all the joy that a pleaſing hope of immortal happineſs is calculated to inſpire. How unfortunate is it that you ſhould have imbibed principles that rob you of half the preſent reward of your virtues! and how ſtrange ſtrenuouſly to reject the belief of a religion, every moral precept of which your practice proves your conſtant approbation of: I take this to be in great meaſure owing to the early prejudices received from a very improper education, which have been hitherto retain'd, and, in a manner, habitually defended, without having given yourſelf the trouble

of a candid examination whether they would ſtand the teſt of a cloſe enquiry. You reject chriſtianity upon the ſame principle that the generality of thoſe who profeſs that religion have embraced it, merely becauſe they were taught to believe it in their infancy, nor have ever allow'd themſelves to doubt of the infallibility of their Teachers.

I dare ſay that, till the late afflicting circumſtance threaten'd the loſs of the bleſſing in which all your temporal happineſs was center'd, you was never, even tranſiently, ſenſible of the inſufficiency of your own tenets to ſupport the mind of man under the various Ills to which his preſent ſtate is incident: Now thoroughly

thoroughly open to that conviction, I make no doubt but you will the more eaſily be led to ſee the fallacy of thoſe arguments by which you have endeavour'd to maintain opinions that every good man would be ſorry to believe true.

Encouraged by this hope, I ſhall attempt to anſwer ſome of the Objections I have heard you make to the immortality of the ſoul, bringing my proofs from reaſon, and probability, excluſive of what might be urged from the chriſtian revelation, which ſhall at preſent be put entirely out of the queſtion; hereafter I may, perhaps, endeavour to prove the validity of that ſyſtem upon the ſame principle, 'till then it would be unfair

to argue with you from it; ſhall therefore confine myſelf to the ſubject of immortality; and try the force of unaſſiſted reaſon in ſupport of that opinion.

You have often aſſerted, that if there be any future ſtate of retribution, there muſt neceſſarily be a conſciouſneſs of this Life included; and if ſo, the happineſs of that ſtate muſt as much depend on the conduct of thoſe who were dear to us here, as on our own; becauſe it will be impoſſible for any benevolent mind to be happy, if it beholds thoſe that were once tenderly beloved doom'd to endleſs miſery, without a poſſibility of alleviating their torments; for, ſay you, if this conſciouſneſs is

diveſted of all paſſion, and gives neither pleaſure, or pain, there might as well be none:—Let us ſee if arguments founded on reaſon, merely, will not be ſufficient to anſwer this.

You acknowledge that there is one ſelf-exiſtent Being, and that from Him all derive their exiſtence whether rational, animal, vegetable, or inanimate; from what we ſee, and know of His works, may we not reaſon with ſome degree of preciſion, by analogy, to what is leſs certainly underſtood? Amongſt all the works of creation, that come under our obſervation, is there any waſte of powers, abilities, qualities, or properties? every plant can receive from

from that ſingle ſpot, to which it is confined, all that is neceſſary for its ſupport, and nouriſhment; it ſickens by removal, and thrives in proportion to the cloſe adheſion of its fibrous root to its mother earth; the power of motion, which would have been injurious, is therefore wiſely denied. —By far the greater number amongſt the different ſpecies of vegetables are deſtined to undergo annual amputations; for this reaſon that mode of ſenſation, which we call feeling, is not given them.—Obſerve the various animals, ſee how their different powers, forms, qualities, and cloathing are proportion'd to their different natures, and the different occupations, or climates, they are deſtin'd to:—Of what uſe to the

mole

mole would have been the eagle's eye, or to the horſe the tiger's claw, feet to the fiſh, or fins to birds? not a ſuperfluous gift is beſtowed, but each ſpecies has exactly that form, conſtruction, and thoſe powers, which are moſt uſeful, neceſſary, and beſt ſuited to itſelf.—It is needleſs to enter into any of the particular proofs of this general truth, which a ſlight obſervation is ſufficient to aſcertain.

Let us then go on to examine man upon the ſame plan:—Compare him with all the different kinds of animals over whom he claims, and exerts a ſovereign power.—Some of theſe are made his food, others neceſſary to the comfort, and con-

venience

venience of his Life in different capacities; neither of which could be obtained by the corporeal qualities he is endow'd with, the brute creation being all, either by ſtrength, ſwiftneſs, or the region they inhabit, beyond the reach of his arm.

The ſuperior ſagacity, therefore, which has enabled him to ſupply, by various arts, this natural defect of corporeal powers, was undoubtedly neceſſary to his ſubſiſtence, becauſe without it he would have been the moſt defenceleſs of all animals equal to himſelf in ſize; unable to procure the ſmaller kinds for his food, and an eaſy prey to the larger.—Suppoſing his whole duration to end with this life, or, at leaſt, that no after conſciouſneſs

ſelouſneſs remains, was not this ſort of ſagacity, by which he braves the lyon's force, bends to the yoke the ſtubborn bullock's neck, breaks to the curb the foaming ſtead, overtakes with certain death the diſtant bird, or from the rapid ſtream drags to the ſhore the ſcaly fry; was not, I ſay, on ſuch a ſuppoſition, this ſort of ſagacity, by which he reigns acknowledged lord of this planet, ſufficient to anſwer all the ends of his creation?—Wherefore then this waſte of rational powers! this capacity of diving into the philoſophical difference between matter, and ſpirit.—Of tracing effects up to their probable cauſes, and accounting rationally for almoſt all the phenomina of nature?—To what end is he endow'd

endow'd with the reaſoning faculty in a degree ſo ſuperior to his fellow mortals here as to feel (if the expreſſion may be allowed) his derivation from ſome eternal exiſtence, and form to himſelf not only a wiſh, but even a probable proſpect of immortality? and that this is the reſult of the natural powers of his mind, excluſive of any ſuppoſed revelation, is evident from the conſtant, though doubtful, hope of philoſophers in the earlieſt ages of the world, from all the accounts that have been tranſmitted to us. Of what uſe to him if conſciouſneſs ends with reſpiration is it to ſee and admire the eternal beauty of truth, the fitneſs of things, the unalterable difference between right and wrong action, or

moral

moral good and evil; the beauty of virtue, and the deformity of vice? and is it reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that in a world wherein we ſee every creature below us exactly ſuited to the manifeſt end of its creation, poſſeſſing juſt what is neceſſary and uſeful to it, and not a ſuperfluous gift beſtowed, that the Creator ſhould have been thus wantonly laviſh in the formation of man alone, and ſtored his mind with uſeleſs faculties in contradiction to the general plan of creation, which is evidently calculated for the utility, convenience, and happineſs of every other ſpecies?——Admitting this to be his whole duration, how eminently wretched is he made by the ſuperior powers he boaſts!—Every animal,

in the different ſcales below himſelf, enjoys the preſent moment, unconſcious of futurity, indulges every riſing wiſh, and fearleſs revels in each joy to which his inclination leads; whilſt man, unhappy man! for no end reſtrains his every Paſſion by the ſevereſt rules of rigid reaſon; and almoſt from the cradle to the grave, treads with trembling ſteps, as every moment on the verge of ruin, in the deluſive hope of bringing his mind to a ſtate of ſuch perfection as will qualify it for immortal happineſs, in that future exiſtence he is formed to expect; ſhould this expectation be vain, can the Being who interwove it in his nature be juſtly deem'd benevolent, or good?—If not, what are the attributes of the God you pretend to own.

You

You ſay the word *immaterial* has no meaning, yet have you frequently aſſerted, that the ſoul is only a fine inviſible fluid, which being ſecreted from the Brain, and diffus'd through the nerves, becomes the actuating Principle; I ſhould be glad to know what is to be underſtood by this? to me it ſeems to imply a contradiction. —By the word inviſible muſt be underſtood ſomething of a Nature not to be diſcovered by our ſight, all *matter* is certainly the object of ſight; give me leave to aſk how you came by the knowledge of this fine *inviſible* fluid? and by what means it acquires the power of thought, reflection, choice, and motion, properties that have never been ſuppoſed to belong to matter.—Reflect a

moment, my friend, on the abſurdities you have ſometimes had recourſe to in ſupport of an opinion that is not to be defended.

The arguments you deduce from the propagation of animals to prove that the whole is matter, becauſe the ſource of life is blood, a material fluid, I ſee no weight in; what more is proved by this than that one particle of matter is ſeparated from another, which ſeparated particle, in proceſs of time, after undergoing a variety of changes, becomes as perfect a man, as to the material part, as he through whoſe purple veins it had long undiſtinguiſhed paſs'd and repaſs'd the various roads of circulation? It is not neceſſary to enter

enter ſo minutely into the ſubject, as to trace this changing atom through all it's varied progreſs.—A few queſtions will ſuffice for our preſent purpoſe. Does it not in proceſs of time receive nutriment from the mother, without any power of choice, as a plant from the ſpot of earth to which it is confined? and may it not be looked upon as a part of herſelf during the many months ſhe bears the encreaſing burthen? If by accident it is ſeparated from her before the appointed time, in what differs it from an amputated limb? was it ever ſuppoſed to have any conſciouſneſs before the moment of reſpiration? the ſenſe of feeling it may, and no doubt does poſſeſs in the ſame degree with the hand, or

foot of thepregnant mother, but no other ſenſe can be attributed to it, therefore to maintain your aſſertion —That the propagation of animals evinces the whole to be matter—You muſt go a ſtep farther, and either give us a poſitive proof that the embrio has, from it's firſt formation, a power of thought, and freedom of will; or a negative one, that no animating, rational, or immaterial principle is infuſed into it at, or after the inſtant of its birth.

By the conſciouſneſs which the immortal mind expects to carry with it from hence, to retain, and either to ſuffer, or enjoy forever in ſome future ſtate of exiſtence, is meant an exact, and indelible remembrance of

of all the paſſions, affections, propenſities, actions, and inclinations of the mind, during the whole period in which it was united to matter, according to the nature of this retroſpect it muſt unavoidably be productive of perfect happineſs, or extreme miſery: the remembrance of having inſtantly checked every propenſity, or riſing inclination, to vice, and ſo regulated every affection by the unerring rule of right reaſon, as to bring the mind into an habitual ſtate of perfect purity, even in ſentiment, muſt afford that uninterrupted felicity, which conſcious rectitude alone is capable of enjoying. Should the mind, thus ſupremely bleſſed, behold the object of it's tendereſt love render'd irretrievably wretched

by a retroſpect diametrically oppoſite to it's own, the deformity of the character muſt raiſe a juſt abhorrence, while grateful pleaſure would be more ſtrongly excited at the thought of being removed to a ſtate of exiſtence, where vice no more could hide it's hateful form beneath the fair ſemblance of a virtuous garb.

Hermione was, perhaps, the faireſt of her ſex, Adraſtus thought her ſoul as faultleſs as her face, in this opinion held her neareſt to his heart, and when the mandate for his diſſolution came, felt no reluctant thought, but that of leaving this dear partner of his joys behind——Farewel, my love, he fainting cry'd, I go to wait thee in ſome better ſtate; haſte

haſte to rejoin me, for till then heaven can to me afford but an imperfect bliſs.——Death ſnatch'd him from her arms.—The mortal veil remov'd, the blaze of truth flaſh'd on his enlighten'd mind, he ſaw her, as ſhe really was, a baſe, deſigning artful hipocrite; fled with horror from the deteſted object, and bleſs'd the moment that diſſolved their Union.

Thus you ſee the happineſs of the good need not be interrupted by the puniſhment of the wicked.—Hermione ſinks to everlaſting ruin, beneath a load of conſcious guilt, whilſt Adraſtus, in perfect rectitude exulting, mounts on high, and looks, with added pleaſure, down upon the the juſt reward of vice.

I diſſent from your opinion, that the ſoul changes yearly like the body; becauſe 'tis undeniably certain, that the ſame propenſities, the ſame paſſions, and the ſame turn of thought, which was diſcoverable in the child of ſeven years old, will be found in the man of forty, if the forming hand of education has not made a change in his ſentiments: To prove this truth there needs nothing more than an accurate obſervation of the exact ſameneſs of diſpoſition, through every ſtage of life, in thoſe on whom no other early care has been beſtow'd, but that of providing for their bodies by proper nouriſhment and cloathing. It wou'd not be difficult to aſſign very probable reaſons for the mind's incapacity to exert itſelf,

itſelf, with equal ſtrength in the infancy of the body; as when that has arrived to a ſtate of maturity, but this would carry me too far at preſent.

Now, my dear Sir, after having treated this matter with all the ſeriouſneſs I ſhould have done to convince a friend of any eſſential error, it is time to tell you, that I do not believe your opinion on the ſubject in debate, differs much from mine; but am convinced that your principal motive for eſpouſing the oppoſite ſide, is to entertain yourſelf, by comparing the different manner in which different people maintain the ſame ſide of an argument; to gratify this inclination, I have run through the

the length of letter you have already peruſed, and in return deſire that your ſtronger powers of reaſoning may be exerted to ſupply any defect you diſcover in my method of ſupporting ſo good a cauſe.

I could wiſh you were not ſo fond of a ſpecies of amuſement, which may ſometime be more injurious in its conſequences than you are aware of: The half reaſoners are the majority amongſt mankind, theſe, incapable of weighing your arguments, will, from an opinion of your ſuperior abilities, be apt implicitly to adopt them, and ſome there are who may be glad to embrace ſuch a ſuppos'd ſanction for releaſing themſelves from all the obligations of morality.——

Would

Would you allow yourſelf to conſider this matter in its proper light, I am convinced that your benevolent heart would no longer find any pleaſure in a diverſion that may by giving a licence you are not aware of, to the conduct of individuals, prove irreparably detrimental to ſociety:—It may perhaps be urged in excuſe for the indulgence of this inclination, that if thoſe who adopt your arguments follow alſo your example, no injury can accrue to ſociety; but let it be remembred that many people may hear the former, who have not an opportunity of ſeeing the latter; and farther, that all who wiſh to be free from the reſtraints of religion and morality, will, while they gladly embrace the one, willfully ſhut

their eyes againſt the other.—Carry on theſe reflections as far as they ought to extend, giving them their due weight, and I am convinced that a mind ſo truly benevolent will no longer find any entertainment in a cuſtom which may be productive of ſo many bad conſequences; your abilities would be much more uſefully employed in defence of the oppoſite ſide, on that I hope one day to ſee them engaged, which would afford inexpreſſible pleaſure to

Your affectionate Friend,

LETTER II.

To Miſs Louiſa ———

I Have been ſo peſter'd, my dear Louiſa, all this day with Attorney's, Solicitor's, and Chancery buſineſs, that my head is full of nothing but law terms; and had I time to write this evening, my letter wou'd have more the appearance of a Counſellor's brief, than a friendly epiſtle; you will, therefore, have no reaſon to regret my want of leiſure to accompany the two encloſed ſheets of my tranſlation, with any thing more from myſelf, than a promiſe of complying with your

your requeſt the firſt opportunity; but you muſt not expect more from me than a few general thoughts, where my opinion happens to be peculiar: there are already too many Treatiſes on Education, moſt of which, I believe, have upon the whole been more injurious than ſerviceable, nor can I think of adding to the number I wou'd wiſh to diminiſh; not believing myſelf ſufficiently qualified to correct the errors of much wiſer perſons who have gone before me, by giving a compleat ſyſtem. My ſentiments, however, you have a right to demand on every ſubject, and ſhall ſoon have them on this.

I have juſt received the encloſed Letter from your Couſin Mr. B——, in

in anſwer to the account I ſent him of the injury his fortune has lately ſuffer'd, you muſt return it to me by the next poſt: ſome parts of it you will be much pleaſed with. His imagination is at preſent too wild; and wants the correction of maturer judgment, but his genius is the moſt promiſing and univerſal I have ever met with, and it is very probable, that he will one day make as great a figure in the literary world, as any this age has produced. —His Letter muſt make up for the brevity of mine, to which I can now only add, that

I am, as ever,
moſt affectionately,

Yours.

To Mrs. P——

DEAR MADAM,

I Thank you much for your laſt obliging letter, the ſubject of which I ſhall probably have reaſon to beg your farther advice upon, and will moſt carefully obſerve your prudent directions.

Was I not determined to be happy, this unexpected diſappointment wou'd make me wretched, but I hope always to preſerve ſuch an opinion of the uncertainty of things in this Life, and ſuch an eaſy turn of temper, that no changes whatever may be able to ſhake my reſolution.—

The

The ways of men are deep, obſcure, and wild,
A thouſand intereſts point a thouſand roads,
Nor half ſo intricate the Gordian knot
As is the map of Life: ſo few can trace
The mazy path that leads to earthly joys,
That he whoſe happineſs is vainly fix'd
On their purſuit, hangs on deluſive hopes
His peace of mind. But give me, gracious Heaven!
Another goal, whoſe road more patent leads,
To bleſſings far beyond the reach of theſe;
That if, perchance, I loſe the winding maze
To riches, honours, fame, parade, and pomp,
I may purſue the more exalted paths
Which point to feaſts for the eternal mind.

Oh! knowledge, conſtant ſource of pleaſures, hail!
Hail ſage philoſophy! whoſe pond'ring ſons
Revolving mighty wonders in their minds,
Have traced out empires, which compar'd to that
By Cæſar ruled, are as the realms of man
To the contracted circuit of a mite.
Oh! tell me not that pleaſure ſolely reigns
Where gold and purple hoiſt their courted flags,—

For e'en the ſwain, who tramps o'er hill and
dale,
Beneath the ſhade his oaten banquet takes,
And quaffs the liquor of the limpid ſtream,
Enjoys the evening breeze, and ſimple chat
Of infant prattlers, and his ready Dame
Who tells the village news: but ſhepherds, ye
I envy not; your joys, like thoſe of courts,
Are as a viſion ſhort; light ills alarm
Your naked minds, for there philoſophy
No place has held, whate'er religion ſage
Has on your vacant breaſts, in myſtic ſenſe
Impreſs'd, to ſoften pain. Ye ſtoic tribe,
Who in the greener days of knowledge bow'd
At truth's imperial fane, ſay, rigid ſires,
Since all muſt err, does not your ſyſtem lead
To vile hypocriſy?—Oh! fiend of man!
May ne'er thy hated magic ſhake its wand
O'er human hearts!——

Yet neither wou'd I praiſe the rigid laws
That Appius follow'd, or that Cato ruled.
There is a beauteous feature of the mind,
A native ſweetneſs breathing peace around;
Benevolence 'tis call'd; on which attend
Whole troops of little charms that win their
way

Into

Into the opening ſoul. When that is join'd
To ſtoic virtue, man is truly bleſt.—
Oh! lovely attribute, how fair thou ſeem'ſt
In courtly Dion, and in Thero good?—
But with uncommon luſtre didſt thou ſhine
In Macedon's great ſon, when at his feet
The Perſian queens their double crowns diſpos'd;
How gaz'd Hepheſtion! how Roxana bluſh'd!—
But ceaſe the Pagan lines, nor dare to praiſe
The ſhort liv'd meteor of a troubled air,
Before the luſtre of your ſun is ſung——

Oh! child of Heaven, and ſmiling prince of peace!
Who when the mighty nations of the world
Had ſhaken hands, then ſcatter'd far and wide
Thy troops of charity and concord fair.——
From thee, benevolence itſelf began.——
Divineſt charm! for knowledge without thee
Will, like a weapon in a madman's hand,
Cauſe tumults, murders, and deſtruction ſad—
Dear power I court thee. SYMPATHY, thy name
I e'er rever'd: the Chaledonian ſage,
Whoſe laſting pages have thy nature taught,
Has op'd thy beauties to the common eye.

And next, ſuppoſing thou haſt deign'd to ſmile,
Rich TASTE, I call on thee; thou courtly dame,
Who feed'ſt on dainties of the choiceſt kind,
Attended by ſoft beauty, harmony, and all
The brighteſt powers of ſenſe, to me, oh! lend
Your wond'rous aid, that when the proſpect wide
Of hills, vales, lawns, green woods, and foaming waves
Expand to view; confuſion may not ſhake
The aching ſenſe, but what is truly fair
Moſt fair may ſeem. And next to thee, bleſt power,
To INDUSTRY I bend my humble knee,
To thee the Stagyrite his wiſdom ow'd,
And Tully bleſt thee; in diſtracted days
Thou fed'ſt him as the Roman daughter fed
Her aged ſire, when liberty had ta'en
Her laſt farewel.———

I cou'd ſcribble on to the end of the ſheet, but fear I have preſumed already too much on your good nature, and ſhall therefore check this poetic vein.

In

In excuſe for thus breaking in upon your engaged moments, permit me to remind you that ſome diſſipation is neceſſary for you, and therefore, my *matterleſs* lines may have their uſe.—You will be no Scaliger, Madam, if you apply too cloſely; the memory, like a cord that has been too long ſtretch'd, on the immediate repetition of the force, is apt to crack. It is mechanical, and it muſt be ſlacken'd, that it may preſerve its power of becoming tight again. I wiſh I cou'd find any ſubject, which in thoſe moments of relaxation, cou'd amuſe you; it not being action ſimply that fatigues the mind, but the ſame mode of action; for as an elaſtic body by being frequently bent one way leans to that

ſide, on being forced equally to the other recovers its intermediate ſtraitneſs; ſo a viciſſitude of oppoſite entertainments, properly appl'd, keep the imagination and ſenſibility in their juſt poſitions; but I almoſt deſpair of affording this entertainment; our petty republic at D—— will furniſh but little news; though, I aſſure you, the jealouſies, and the party feuds carried forwards among our feather'd heroes, afford us no ſmall diverſion; we have Marius's and Sylla's, Cæſar's and Pompey's; aye, and Auguſtus' too, for your black and white chantileer talks as much, and does as little, as that hero in council, and coward in battle Octavius Cæſar: but think not, my dear Madam, that

we

we have no other entertainments than what the cackling world afford us; though to give the word cackle one of it's pointed ſignifications, it is no uncommon ſum total of country amuſements. We breakfaſt, Madam, with Ariſtotle, and paſs our pick-tooth hours with Orpheus, ſo that we keep up a good alliance between the underſtanding and the ſenſes. I begin to have hopes that my gay friend will make a grave philoſopher; and he does not deſpair of raiſing me into a muſician; beſides the aſſiſtances of philoſophy and muſic, we ſee the ſun, and taſte the clear air of health; rarities ſeldom ſerved up to London tables: nay more, we get ſome time to think, which I ſcarce ever found attainable in the buſy metropolis.

From this picture I have drawn of the advantages we boaſt, methinks I ſee you ſhake your head, and hear you ſay, "What! ſtill in the old "poetic way, always painting the "partial picture, ſtill forcing roſes "from the briars and perſuading us "there are moſſy banks without cold "dews!"—Why then, Madam, to confeſs the truth, now and then we complain of the roads being dirty nd the rooms cold, but upon the whole D—— is, in our opinion, preferable to London, and moſt undoubtedly will continue ſo, even when the novelty wears off, if we are frequently favour'd with your letters, which will add to this ſcale a ballance ſufficient to counteract the only conſiderable advantage that London poſſeſſes.

The

The pleaſure you feel in communicating happineſs will, I dare ſay, induce you to write ſoon to

Your moſt obliged,

and obedient ſervant.

The Adventures of ALPHONSO *continued.*

DON Antonio's eyes were now ſo far open'd as to ſee the neceſſity of taking every prudent precaution againſt a man who had evidently ſhewn himſelf devoid of every virtuous principle. He thought it no longer ſafe to leave in his poſſeſſion the many papers of conſequence that had been committed to his care; and apprehending, with too much reaſon, the poſſibility of his refuſing to deliver them, took advantage of the young man's abſence, and, while you were gone to inform your uncle of your new engagement, ſecured them by having the bureau convey'd to his own ſtudy.

Fran-

Franciſco came in the evening to receive the final anſwer he had demanded, was at firſt ſtartled to ſee the proof of his guilt in the power of his patron, but obſerving the locks unbroken recover'd his ſurprize, ſaw the neceſſity of an inſtant execution of his wicked purpoſe, reſolved not to loſe a moment in converſation, at once varied his whole behaviour, acknowledg'd with feign'd contrition his preceding fault, and after entreating forgiveneſs with all imaginable appearance of ſubmiſſive duty, and real affection, changed the ſubject to that of ſome buſineſs he had before been order'd to tranſact; but terrified at the danger to which he was every moment expoſed, by an examination of the papers, had not

patience

patience to wait the opportunity of exchanging the boxes, and affraid of truſting the matter to any hazard, boldly ventured to offer a pinch of the fatal powder. Spight of all his natural reſolution and acquired aſſurance, his extended arm quiver'd as it preſented the baneful compoſition, and the agitation of his mind occaſion'd ſo wild a diſtraction in his eyes, that Antonio, ſhock'd at the appearance, roſe haſtily from his ſeat, by which means the box was ſtruck from the villain's trembling hand, and fell upon the head of a puppy that lay ſleeping on the floor. Franciſco knowing that the immediate effect of the powder on the animal wou'd be an undeniable proof of his murderous deſign, and dread-

ing

ing the conſequence of ſo certain a detection, waited not for the diſcovery, but inſtantly quiting the room fled precipitantly to the port, where he found the veſſel you had been on the point of embarking in, ready to weigh anchor; agreed with the captain, and conceal'd himſelf on board till the next morning when the ſhip ſet ſail. The laſt precaution was unneceſſary, for the good Antonio, though aſcertain'd, beyond a doubt, of the danger he had eſcap'd, by ſeeing the puppy extended in a moment breathleſs at his feet, far from intending to purſue him with the vengeance juſtly deſerved, rejoiced at his flight in the hope that he might live to avert, by a ſincere repentance, the puniſhment his

crimes

crimes had too well merited. Whilſt the good man return'd thanks to heaven for his own deliverance from the power of ſuch a monſter of ingratitude, he offer'd up the warmeſt prayers for the repentance, reformation, and pardon of the ungrateful villain; and not to bar his return to virtue, by ſuch an impeachment of his character as muſt forever have excluded him from the ſociety of honeſt men, conceal'd the horrid ſtory, deſtroy'd every paper that might have proved his guilt, and lock'd the dangerous ſecret forever in his breaſt. This worthy man, to the hour of his death, knew not what became of the wretched Fanciſco. The ſhip in which he had fled from the expected puniſhment of his crimes was, three

days

days after, taken by an Algerine Rover. It was Franciſco's lot to be ſold to one of the moſt cruel of men, by whoſe ill treatment being one day provoked to ſome abuſive language, he order'd his tongue to be taken out, and condemn'd him to perpetual labour in the mines, where he daily curſes his own folly and laments the loſs of ſpeech, which deprives him of power to utter the horrid imprecations his heart in ſilence dictates.

You will now, added my kind protector, be very ſoon in a condition to accompany me through the pathleſs air to thoſe ſcenes I am commanded to ſhew you; a ſhort time we muſt yet wait till you are perfectly puri-

fied

fied from all the groſs, and heavy particles of matter, with which you are ſtill in ſome meaſure incumber'd; this I ſhall employ in recounting to you, or rather in recalling to your remembrance, a few other inſtances wherein you will ſee how my attendant care has guarded you from evil; and that though I have often directed your choice it has never been in ſuch a manner as to infringe your own agency, or lay the leaſt reſtraint on the freedom of your will, but that the ſervice I have been able to render you, was wholly owing to the attention you have conſtantly paid to the firſt thought ſuggeſted on every occurrence, which was never with a ſtrength ſufficient to *impel*, except only in the laſt inſtance that brought you

you hither, and for which a particular commiſſion was given me for the purpoſes you will hereafter know.

Recollect the ſecond voyage you made for Antonio—How earneſtly the men entreated you to land, upon an unknown Iſland, for a ſupply of freſh water; you have not forgot the diſlike you inſtantly felt at the propoſal; or your reſolution, in conſequence of that diſlike, not to permit them to go on ſhore, though they were ready to mutiny at the refuſal; but you are unacquainted with what wou'd have been the conſequence of a compliance with this requeſt: had you landed, you had all met the fate of Don Alvaro, who

was ſuppoſed to have periſhed in a ſtorm, but in reality was, with his whole crew, deſtroy'd in this Iſland, where, at a certain ſeaſon of the year, a great number of Indians come to gather a kind of wild pomegranate, which grows there in great abundance: while theſe are drying in the ſun, they employ themſelves in hunting a little animal of whoſe ſkin they make bags for the dried fruit. During their ſtay in the Iſland, which is for the ſpace of two moons, 'tis certain death to any mortal who unfortunately touches the inhoſpitable ſhore. At the time you paſs'd, about five hundred of them were engaged in theſe employments; they ſaw your veſſel at a diſtance, drew up all their Canoes into a creek out

of

of ſight, and conceal'd themſelves behind a rock that hung over the ſea; had you landed they would have ruſh'd forth and intercepted your return to the ſhip; your prudent reſolution alone diſappointed their intended purpoſe.

The very next morning Don Alvaro came in ſight of the Iſland, his good Genius admoniſhed him in the ſame manner I had done you, he felt a kind of preſentiment that ſome ill conſequence would attend the landing, and for ſome time ſtrenuouſly oppoſed it, but at length, contrary to his own opinion, or rather the good impreſſion received, reluctantly ſuffer'd himſelf to be prevailed upon to go on ſhore by the repeated

intreaties of a nephew to whom he had been always moſt blamably indulgent; each took a gun and ammunition; and having walked a good way up the country, which was wholly uncultivated, without ſeeing any trace of inhabitants concluded there were none, and ſat down, without fear, to regale themſelves, by the ſide of a Rivulet, with the fruits they had gather'd and enjoy the delightful proſpect around them; ſoon was this pleaſing ſcene interrupted by repeated ſhouts from the Indians, who having taken another courſe behind a little eminence, came at once unperceived upon them; they defended themſelves with the utmoſt bravery, but were ſoon ſurrounded, overpower'd by numbers, ſtript and bound;

bound; two were inſtantly devour'd in ſight of their trembling companions, the reſt put together in a cavern from whence an equal number were every day ſelected for the ſame horrid purpoſe; Don Alvaro was the laſt that periſhed, and during eight days confinement in the cavern felt more anguiſh from the painful reflection of having conſented to this expedition, contrary to what he thought the dictates of his own judgment which had at once diſapprov'd the propoſal, than from the apprehenſion of the horrid death that awaited him, which he ſubmitted to with the moſt becoming compoſure. The ſavages, after having ſeized and ſtript the veſſel of what they could carry off, bored holes in her Sides,

and cut the cables when the wind blew ſtrong from the ſhore, that the appearance of a wreck on the coaſt might not deter others from approaching it.

Thus periſh'd every veſſel which unfortunately touch'd upon the Iſland during their annual viſit; and not a man from either eſcaping to tell the wretched fate of his companions, 'tis to this day ſuppoſed they were all loſt by the common accidents of the ſea. Had Don Alvaro attended to the admonition given by his good Genius, and obey'd the firſt impulſe on his mind, the fatal cataſtrophy had been avoided: had you rejected the impreſſion made on yours, like his had been your pitiable exit, each had

had the ſame warning given, and each was free to take or to refuſe it; beyond this extends not our permiſſion, except in caſes moſt extraordinary, and by particular direction. —Again,

You cannot have forgot the propoſal that was made to you by Don Fredrick Lopez, to eſpouſe his ſiſter, whoſe rank and fortune were far beyond what you could make any pretentions to; his earneſtneſs to effect a Match, every way ſo unequal, I repreſented to you as a juſt cauſe for ſuſpicion that there might be ſome ſiniſter end conceal'd; the more he preſs'd the more you found yourſelf diſpos'd to decline it, yet doubted a little whether in point of prudence

you ought to reject an offer ſo apparently advantageous; I urg'd you to conſult Antonio, whoſe intentions I knew; this gave him an opportunity of declaring them, and your marriage with his ſiſter Artimiſſa enſued. The happy conſequences of that which you have many years enjoy'd 'tis needleſs to repeat, but I ſhall tell you, that had you rejected my admonitions, and accepted the ſiſter of Don Lopez, you would have been the moſt unhappy of men. Under the fair ſemblance of a moſt virtuous appearance, her heart was the receptacle of every vice, and at this time ſhe bore the fruit of her brother's inceſtuous love; the apprehenſion of this conſequence determin'd him to diſpoſe of her in mar-

marriage—Gomezo ſoon after accepted the offer you had refuſed; they are better ſuited; there lives not two more vicious, or more wretched mortals, each hates and deſpiſes in the other what both indulge in themſelves, and are invariably conſtant only in a mutual deſire to torment.

I ſee, continued my Inſtructor, it is needleſs to point out any more circumſtances of this nature, as your own remembrance already recalls a variety of the ſame kind, through moſt of which I obſerve you now can trace my impreſſions, and perceive the ſervice they have been to you; I may therefore proceed to the laſt inſtance of my operation on your

mind,

mind, the only one that was in any degree compulſive; but will firſt ſatisfie the deſire I perceive you have to know why I urg'd you to go from Liſbon the morning of it's deſtruction, for you are now ſenſible *that* impulſe came from me: it was becauſe I foreſaw your ſtay would have been productive of far greater evils than thoſe you have ſuſtain'd, to which compared, the loſs you now lament would be eſteem'd a favour that claim'd your higheſt gratitude. Well may you be aſtoniſh'd at a declaration that to you appears impoſſible—Attend and be convinc'd.

LETTER IV.

To Mrs. G———.

THE Spirit of true piety that breathes through the whole of the old Gentleman's Letter I knew, my Dear Friend, would give you much pleaſure; my reaſon for not ſending more was, that ſuch a fameneſs runs through them all as to ſhew as much of the man in one, as in fifty. All his thoughts had one bent, and all his letters contained exactly the ſame ſentiments differently expreſſed: In compliance with your requeſt, however, I ſhall ſend you another by this poſt, which will prove the truth of

of my opinion. A better man the World never produced, or one leſs fitted to inhabit it; the honeſty of his heart, and the eaſineſs of his diſpoſition, made him the conſtant prey of deſigning people; nor were the things of this world of ſufficient moment to him to engage ſo much of his attention as was barely neceſſary to the preſervation of his fortune; he choſe rather to be cheated than indulge a ſuſpicion of the perſons about him; thought it a duty to believe all men honeſt till he evidently diſcover'd them to be otherwiſe; and this could only happen by chance, as he never gave himſelf the trouble of making an accurate obſervation; nor indeed do I believe, that toward the latter part of life, it was in his power

to

to turn his thoughts out of their accuſtom'd religious channel ſo much as would have been neceſſary for this purpoſe. There were perſons about him who took every advantage of a diſpoſition ſo favourable to their own intereſt; of whom, nevertheleſs, he long retained a good opinion, but in the end was undeceived by their too unguarded purſuit of the mercenary plan; though not till after they had, by falſe repreſentations, artfully drawn him into an irrevocable donation very injurious to his daughter; and which, in fact, he had no right to make: he was afterwards convinced of the error, and illegality of this ſtep, which it was not in his power to retract, was much hurt at the thought of having been ſo groſly impos'd

impos'd upon, and told my friend ſhe might make uſe of her right, after his deceaſe, to diſpute a poſſeſſion ſo unfairly acquired. This a variety of reaſons have hitherto prevented her doing.—Thus it generally happens with deſigning people; ſucceſs in their ſchemes encreaſes their unjuſtifiable deſires, which are purſued with more eagerneſs and leſs caution; paſt experience gives a falſe ſecurity, they venture too boldly and betray themſelves; by which the power of doing farther miſchief is happily loſt.—Were it not for this infatuation the good and virtuous would be preſently over run by the knaviſh and vicious part of mankind. May not this be what the Apoſtle means, ſpeaking of the

wicked,

wicked, by the term—Given up to their own hearts deſire, &c.

I am ſorry that I cannot procure any of my young friend's religious letters, as you expreſs ſo ſtrong a deſire to ſee them, no copies were taken, and the originals, I believe, were burnt amongſt other uſeleſs papers, by her father's executors; a few verſes of that kind which my memory retains, I will encloſe in this letter, if I have time; you would have been better pleaſed with her proſe on theſe ſubjects, had any of them remained, as they were more correct than her verſes at that age. Some lines, you will ſee, are plainly what Mr. Hurd calls a poetical imitation, the fault of moſt young wri-

ters

ters, who involuntarily copy the manner of thoſe authors they read with pleaſure; and, I believe, frequently make uſe even of their words, without the intention of doing ſo. The remarks of the ingenious author, juſt mentioned, are extremely juſt; I was much entertained at the time of reading them, but have ſince found they have led my mind into ſuch a habit of criticiſing, and comparing, as to rob me of half the pleaſure I ſhould otherwiſe have received from all the books ſince peruſed; for by following his accurate obſervations, I find almoſt every new publication contains little more than ſcraps of old authors thrown together in a new form: thus what has been gained on the ſide of judgment is loſt on that

of

of pleaſure; and, allowing the due weight that each of theſe ought to have in a ſtate of exiſtence where both are at beſt ſo imperfect, is this acquiſition to be deem'd an advantage?

I ſhall now haſten through the remaining time to the death of Mrs. M——, and the unhappy marriage of her daughter; having mention'd a ſufficient number of thoſe circumſtances which, by ſhewing her character in its true light, will reconcile the apparent contrarities of her conduct.

After the Arcadian ſcene, already related, the unfortunate ſhepherdeſs, tired with the continual watch that

was kept over her, obtained her mother's leave to go home a few weeks before the reſt of the family: At their return ſhe evidently ſaw the uſe, which the prudent old maiden gentlewoman had made of her abſence to raiſe in Mr. M—— every poſſible ſuſpicion of his daughter; and to convince him how much he would ſtand in need of *her* aſſiſtance in caſe of his wife's death; during this time ſhe gained ſo much ground in his opinion, that he gave her the name of Prudentia, by which we will hereafter call her. The effects immediately experienced by my friend convinced her of the abſolute neceſſity of letting her mother into the whole affair, and the treatment ſhe had met with upon it, as there

appeared

appeared no other poſſible method of diſpoſſeſſing Prudentia of the aſcendency ſhe had gained over her father, but by letting him ſee how thoroughly her plan would be diſapproved by the perſon he had, of all others, the higheſt opinion of: This ſucceeded according to her expectation, though Mrs. M—— very juſtly blamed her daughter for indulging a whim that had expoſed her to this mortification; ſhe entirely condemn'd every ſtep that had been taken in conſequence of it; repreſented to her huſband the ill effects that ſuch management muſt neceſſarily have on his daughter; and enjoined him never to put her under the direction of perſons ſo totally unacquainted with the proper method of regulating her conduct. He ſaw

the force of the arguments urged, was convinced by them, and reſolved to purſue the plan the good lady had laid down to him in the plaineſt terms; in conſequence of which the advice he had before paid ſo much attention to was no longer regarded.

Here my young friend's vivacity got the better of her judgment; elated with her triumph, ſhe treated Prudentia and her family in ſo contemptuous a manner, that their viſits were leſs frequent; on finding them leſs acceptable, they had patience to wait a more proper ſeaſon, and too much art to ſhew the inclination, when they had not the power to puniſh. From this time to the death of Mrs. M—— I believe, they

attempted

attempted not to interfere in her family, but this good lady's eyes were no ſooner cloſed, than their attempts were renewed to regain their former influence.

Miſs M. was at firſt inconſolable for the loſs of her mother; on the day wherein ſhe was to be buried, the phyſician who had attended her, a very ſenſible man and an intimate friend of Mr. M——, apprehenſive of the ill effects which the agitation of mind on this ſolemn occaſion might have on my young friend's health, as ſhe was then far from well, propoſed to the old gentleman, that a young lady of their intimate acquaintance, a very prudent and ſenſible girl, ſhould be permitted to

ſtay the evening with them, which ſhe had very obligingly offer'd in hopes of being able, in ſome meaſure, to divert their attention from the melancholy ſound of that bell which muſt proclaim the moment wherein the laſt ſad offices were paid. This propoſal was approved, the young lady came, ſat with them the whole evening, and endeavoured by every poſſible method to ſooth the melancholy which oppreſs'd them both; juſt before the commencement of the ſad ſolemnity came Prudentia and her ſiſter, they ſent for Mr. M. out of the room, told him their intention was to conſole him under his affliction not having the leaſt expectation of finding company with his daughter *at ſuch a time*; the good old

old gentleman related how it happen'd, and as the young lady was no ſtranger to them deſired they would ſtay; which was refuſed, on pretence of its being indecent to ſee any perſon that was no relation to the family; they left him with all appearance of ſurprize and aſtoniſhment, after throwing out ſome hints of the cenſures that muſt be paſs'd on a daughter's ſeeing company while her mother lay dead in the houſe.

This made ſome addition to the ſorrowful widdower's diſtreſs, by leaving his mind in doubt whether he had not done wrong in approving this viſit; which was all the preſent effect, though theſe hints afterwards ſerved for a good foundation to work upon.

My Friend's heart was not a ſoil wherein ſorrow could be of long duration; the firſt impreſſions of grief were violent, but theſe quickly wore off, and her mind ſoon returned to its former ſtate: ſhe now reminded her father of his promiſe not to put her under the direction of Prudentia, and her family, which he renewed; committed the management of his family to her care, exhorted her to be prudent, grave, and attentive, and to follow her late mother's example; and aſſured her, on theſe conditions, ſhe ſhould be entirely miſtreſs of her actions. Nothing cou'd have made her more happy than this aſſurance; in return for which ſhe promiſed all he deſired, and very ſincerely intended it; but

was too young to diſcharge the truſt committed to her care in ſo cautious and ſteady a manner, as not to leave frequent openings for perſons who were continually upon the watch to point out faults in her conduct. Any inſtances of bad management, tho' proceeding only from want of the judgment that muſt be founded on experience, were immediately remarked and artfully painted in the ſtrongeſt colours, by aſking ſuch ſeemingly accidental queſtions as would naturally lead a perſon of Mr. M—'s turn to the opinion intended to be conveyed; without giving the leaſt appearance of *deſign* in the enquiry. By theſe methods ſhe was inſenſibly undermined in her father's opinion, and not ſuſpecting

his

his being thus continually practiſed upon, was frequently ſurprized at his finding fault pettiſhly with thoſe family affairs in which, not having really the leaſt judgment, he was often wrong; the ground ſhe daily loſt was by theſe artful methods gained by Prudentia, who had always ſpies upon her actions, and having picked up a variety of trifling incidents of a kind that might bear a diſadvantageous conſtruction, repeated them to her father, and once more adviſed him to purſue the plan ſhe had before propoſed, and lay thoſe reſtraints on his daughter which *her* wiſdom judged to be neceſſary. One circumſtance, that I forgot to mention in its proper place, contributed greatly to the ſucceſs of this deſign. A young

A young gentleman whom Miſs M—— had ſong encouraged to follow her, with ſome hopes of ſucceſs, grew very importunate for permiſſion to make propoſals to Mr. M——, this ſhe would not conſent to, chooſing neither to diſmiſs or marry him, one of which muſt have been the conſequence of ſuch a permiſſion, and therefore ſeemed rather to defer, than abſolutely refuſe it. He wrote ſeveral letters to her on this ſubject, after the death of her mother, probably with a deſign of getting ſome promiſe under her hand: Theſe letters ſhe was imprudent enough to anſwer, tho' in a very cautious manner, yet with ſome expreſſions of affection, but at the ſame time refus'd to grant the deſired permiſſion,

miſſion, on pretence that her father had already engaged her to another, and conſequently would be diſpleaſed at her having allow'd his addreſſes; exhorted him to think no more of her, but not in a manner that was likely to produce ſuch an effect. The circumſtances of the engagement have been already related, which were ſuch as, you ſee, could not have any great weight with her, but were thought ſufficient to anſwer the preſent purpoſe.

This young gentleman was amongſt the number of thoſe whoſe addreſſes ſhe thought were paid more to her fortune than her perſon; and ſuch it was her conſtant cuſtom to encourage, by falſe hopes, as long as poſſible,

which ſhe unjuſtly call'd a proper puniſhment for falſe pretences. However, he became at length too importunate and troubleſome, to be put off any longer—A cauſe of quarrel was then to be found,— he was fond of gaming—ſhe peremptorily forbad his playing on pain of never ſpeaking to her again—he promiſed to obey, and every day ſaw the hazard table ſurrounded without encreaſing the number; this ſtrict obſervance of the injunction defeated her intention, ſhe ſaw through the motive of his obedience, was not weak enough to be deceived by it, and concluded that to be ſecure of her abſence would immediately afford the opportunity ſhe ſought. This opinion was ſoon verified. Coming

in

in unexpectedly, when ſuppoſed to be many miles diſtant, ſhe found him ſo deeply engaged in play that it was ſome time before he obſerved her ſtanding by him; he roſe in confuſion, attempted an excuſe that was rejected with contempt, ſhe would not hear any juſtification, gave him at once a formal diſmiſſion, declared her reſolution never to ſpeak to him again, and left the room immediately. In vain did he afterwards intreat to be heard, in vain employ his friends to interceed for him, ſhe remained inexorable, and would not be prevail'd with to treat him with common civility. Diſappointed in his hopes, and provoked by ſuch extreme ill uſage, he threaten'd to be revenged by ſhewing her letters; this threat

was

was artfully conveyed to an intimate acquaintance of hers, by one of his, who ſtrenuouſly adviſed the making up the quarrel to prevent ſo injurious a conſequence; ſhe now too late repented the having neglected to get back her letters before a rupture, but was determined not to recover them by this method; and, knowing they did not contain any thing of much moment, choſe rather to run the hazard of ſeeing them made public, than permit the continuance of his addreſſes. Her conduct in this affair was no doubt highly blamable, nothing can be ſaid in excuſe for it, and how bad ſoever the conſequences had proved, they would have been juſtly deſerved.

Did

Did the effects of this coquetiſh diſpoſition ceaſe with the indulgence of, or inclination to it, the turn would be leſs unfortunate; but it frequently happens that the ill impreſſions, thus ſtampt, laſt thro' life, and are ſo ſtrong that the moſt prudent ſubſequent conduct is not ſufficient to efface them. The opinion fixed by a few ſuch incidents is hardly ever to be ſhaken; and very often has it happened, that a point of the utmoſt moment has been many years after diſadvantageouſly determined, merely upon the prejudice imbibed from this kind of miſconduct in the early part of Life; a fact ſhe has ſince unhappily experienced; yet how difficult is it to enforce this conviction at the time when only it could

could be of ſervice! the ſtrongeſt arguments often prove ineffectual, and 'till the conſequences are felt they are ſeldom believed. Is not this, my dear Madam, too much the caſe thro' life with the major part of mankind?—Is not almoſt all the experience we gain, purchaſed at the expence of inconveniences, and vexations, entailed by falſe ſteps in our own conduct? will all the talking in the world convince a young man, who is ſenſible of no immediate ill-effects from intemperance, that his conſtitution will in time be inevitably ruined by it, and muſt he not feel this truth before he believes it? Does not every good man naturally conclude that others are as honeſt and well meaning as himſelf; and 'till he

has ſuffer'd ſeverely from acting up to this opinion, is he to be convinced of the miſtake? carry this enquiry on, and it will hold throughout. Upon this principle half the errors of mankind may be accounted for, and in ſome meaſure extenuated. We enter this world perfect ſtrangers to all that ſurround us, the firſt impreſſions are aſtoniſhment and admiration; curioſity next ſucceeds, and the firſt uſe made of ſpeech is to aſk information, here unfortunately we are always led wrong: the ſort of perſons to whom the care of infancy is uſually committed, having no right notions themſelves, cannot poſſibly convey any. The child at ſeven years old begins to be ſenſible of the errors imbibed from his nurſe:

the

the lad of fifteen, obſerving the contrariety of opinions, is bewilder'd in his choice, knows not which to embrace, and attempts to form one of his own; this is generally adapted to the prevailing inclination, which makes him doubly tenacious of it; and gives ſo ſtrong a biaſs to the growing judgment, that 'tis often very late before the man diſcovers it's fallacy: Thus impeded in the ſearch of truth by a ſucceſſion of errors, paſſions, and prejudices, that are for years of ſtronger growth than reaſon, we reach the confines of the grave before we arrive at that knowledge of ourſelves, and the world we are connected with, which alone can enable us to act with prudence and propriety in it—Wretched indeed would be the

ſtate of man was this to be the whole of his exiſtence! but regarding it only as a probationary, and a progreſſive ſtate, every improvement in virtue, every encreaſe of knowledge, affords peculiar ſatisfaction from the certainty of having thereby advanced ſo much nearer to that abſolute perfection, which alone can ſecure unalterable happineſs beyond the grave. —Adieu, my dear friend, I can no more than ſubſcribe myſelf

moſt affectionately Yours, &c.

The following Verſes were addreſſed to a biſhop on her reading his plain account of an inſtitution, which had before been treated by ſome of the

the Clergy in a moſt unreaſonable and unintellgible manner.

Accept, great Hoadly, theſe unworthy lays,
Too young my Muſe to ſing thy matchleſs praiſe,
Yet take the tribute of a thankful pen,
Due to thy Labours, greateſt, beſt of men!

To veil religion in a miſtic cloud,
And keep in ignorance the wondring crowd,
For ages paſt, has ſeemed the prieſtly art;
To undeceive, has been thy nobler part;
T' explain the text as Chriſt himſelf deſign'd,
And free from ſlaviſh fear the virtuous mind,
Glorious the taſk!—Men yet unborn ſhall own
They owe their virtues to thy works alone.
Was Britian's Church with men like thee ſupply'd,
Who ſway'd by neither Intereſt or pride,
Dared honeſtly oppoſe religious guile,
And with plain truth illuminate the Iſle,
Prieſtcraft ſhould be the ſtanding jeſt no more,
But men revere what they deſpis'd before.

To Mr. M———, *written when in an ill ſtate of health.*

THE pious mind, in wonder loſt, ſurveys
Thy works, O God! and adoration pays:
Before thy awful throne, devoutly bows,
And brings thy tribute of obedient vows.
With ſhame confeſſing former guilt incur'd,
She dreads the wrath recorded in thy word,
But to the refuge of thy pardon flies,
And on the merit of thy Son relies;
Accepts his offers, and fulfills his laws,
And on *his terms*, to him commits her cauſe.
She owns, ſeverely kind, thy will ordains
This blended ſtate of happineſs, and pains:
She feels the bleſſings which thy hand beſtows,
Beneath the preſſure of unnumbered woes,
Thankful for theſe, ſubmiſſive under thoſe.
Whene'er thy hand reſumes the favours lent,
Of health, or friends, ſhe feels no diſcontent;
Yielding to reaſon's and religion's voice,
Prefers thy Wiſdom, to her erring choice;
To every ill, allows her rightful claim;
But for each bleſſing glorifies thy name;
Nor proudly forms a wiſh to chooſe her ſtate,
But joys to think thy will ſhall fix her fate.

Anxious

Anxious alone to gain thy kind regard
By ſtrict obedience to thy ſacred word;
To thy paternal care commits the reſt,
And knows Thy Will, whate'er that is, is beſt.

To the ſame.

On the chief Happineſs of Man.

IN all the diff'rent Schemes mankind purſue
The end the ſame; 'Tis happineſs in view:
For this, the Mariner while breaking waves
Threat inſtant death, the dang'rous paſſage braves:
For this th' Aſtrologer whole ſleepleſs nights
Fix'd to the Tube, explores the varying lights:
For this, the Miſer hoards his ſhining Pelf,
And aims at happineſs, by heaping wealth:
For this, ſome tread the ſlip'ry paths of ſtate,
And fancy bliſs annex'd to being great;
Others to different pleaſures give the reins,
And diſappointment crowns their fruitleſs pains.—
All are deceiv'd, who *here* expect to find
Ought that can *ſatisfie* the human mind;
Search thro' the World, nothing created can
Afford the proper happineſs of man.

That power immenſe who gave all being birth,
Who form'd the Heavens, and who upholds the
earth,
Whoſe word firſt made, whoſe mercy ſtill ſuſtains
Thoſe worlds unknown, o'er which his juſtice
reigns,
Whoſe ſmiles alone create eternal peace,
Is the true center of our real bliſs.
That man alone obtains the end deſir'd,
Whoſe boſom with immortal love is fir'd;
Who follows happineſs in virtue's road,
And ſteadily obeys the will of God:
Who will by no temptation be betray'd;
Nor can by fear of puniſhment be ſway'd:
Whoſe fixt deſign is ſteadfaſtly purſued,
To ſeek his maker as his chiefeſt good:
Who by th' unerring Rule his way directs,
Watches each word, and every thought inſpects,
Gives up his own to the almighty Mind,
To act, or ſuffer, is alike reſign'd.
This man, of Heaven's protection ever ſure
While thouſands fall around ſhall ſtand ſecure;
While thoſe who plac'd their happineſs below
Shall wake from dreams of bliſs to endleſs woe,
He finds his joys by added time encreas'd,
And the beſt bleſſings are reſerv'd 'till laſt.

Happy

Happy in Life, and when approaching death
In ghaſtly form, demands his fleeting breath,
The long expected ſummons gladly hears,
While conſcious virtue diſſipates his fears,
Whom he has truſted, whom believ'd he knows,
To whom the unembodied ſpirit goes;
Safely he ventures thro' the darkſome way,
The deſtin'd paſſage to eternal Day,
Hopes in his God, nor finds that hope deceiv'd,
But is by him to endleſs bliſs receiv'd,
And crown'd with glory which can never fade,
Enjoys in Heaven that God he here obey'd.

LETTER V.

To Mr. B——

IN ſuch lively colours do you paint the rural beauties of nature, * and the happineſs reſulting from the ſtudy and enjoyment of them, that 'tis ſcarce poſſible to read the expreſſive deſcription, without ſickening at the thought of a confinement to this noiſy metropolis, and longing to ſhare your calm and improving retirement. Happy is your friend in a companion ſo qualified to point out all that can in every ſcene either delight or inſtruct the mind; he will in time, no doubt, learn of you to reliſh the

* See vol. 2d, Letter 6.

prudent

prudent exchange of a life of riot and inſignificancy for the compoſing rational pleaſures of a philoſophic retirement; from which alone reſults what may properly be call'd happineſs; the moſt the former can beſtow is a ſhort ſuſpenſion of miſery procured by a total diſſipation of thought; for that mind muſt be miſerable indeed that knows no higher enjoyments than what a gay life, as it is improperly call'd, can afford; a fondneſs for thoſe generally gives an indifference, or rather an averſion to retirement; if after the novelty wears off, you continue equally pleaſed with your preſent ſituation, you are the only young man, I have met with, who can, with the ſame apparent ſatisfaction, enjoy both

wiſdom

wiſdom and folly, and always ſuit yourſelf to the preſent ſcene, whatever that may happen to be: Your diſpoſition is certainly like your genius, entirely at your own command, and equal to every taſk. If that genius forgave the ſudden check it received from you when writing laſt to me, it is more than I can eaſily perſuade myſelf to do, and had I the vanity to think that my ſilence would be any puniſhment, would not write to you theſe three months.—Could any thing be more provoking than to break off in the midſt of ſo beautiful a deſcription when I was even on the point of catching the pleaſing infection.

Attentive

Attentive to thy elevated ſong,
In admiration loſt! my raptur'd ſoul
Her trembling pinions ſpread, and boldly ſprung
To mount the ſeraph's wing that bore thy muſe
Sublime, in pomp majeſtic, to the court of
Heaven.—
When lo! thy tuneful numbers ceaſe—
Abruptly ceaſe!—To check my daring flight.——

The ſevereſt puniſhment I can inflict will be to write you a very long and ſtupid letter, curioſity will no doubt carry you to the end of it, and then you may enjoy the mortification of having reaped neither pleaſure or profit from the expence of much time in reading the whole.—To begin.

Your laſt Letter aſks many queſtions, which you immediately anſwer for me; but not in the manner I ſhould

ſhould have anſwered them myſelf, conſequently the deductions from them are not to be allowed.

By prediſpoſitions I do not mean the different degrees of fear or love towards different objects, reſulting from a compariſon made between them, and a determination formed upon that compariſon; but that tendency obſervable in the minds of children, even in the earlieſt infancy, to kindneſs, or cruelty, courage, or cowardice, frowardneſs, or patience, humility, or pride, &c. which tendency is not occaſioned by any given preference to one more than the other of theſe, but evidently proceeds from a kind of natural inclination in the mind, before reaſon has gained ſufficient

ficient ſtrength to exert itſelf in forming compariſons whereon to fix any proper determination; when time has ripened the judgment, and thereby given the power of this exertion, does it not frequently happen that reaſon, diſapproving the previous choice of inclination, is employed to conquer theſe diſpoſitions? The extreme difficulty ſhe frequently finds in the conqueſt proves them to be, as it were, interwoven with the ſoul, and the certain victory always in her power (if allowed a fair trial) clearly evinces the impoſſibility of their proceeding from different modes of union between the ſenſient and the ſenſible ſyſtems; becauſe, theſe modes being unalterable, the effects produced by them muſt be unchangably

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the ſame, while that union laſts: This Hypotheſis therefore, tho' very prettily urg'd, to me appears not to be defenſible. The aſſertion which immediately follows, I cannot allow to be founded on fact.

As you own the authority of the chriſtian revelation, from *that* muſt your religious opinions be taken; and that revelation does not ſay that the Deity requires the ſame degree of perfection from all mankind, which you have alledged to prove that the capacity or powers of all men muſt be equal; on the contrary, it plainly declares, that of them to whom much is given, much ſhall be required; and that from thoſe who have received an inferior degree of ability,

inferior

inferior improvements are expected. Nor does this inequality of gifts reflect either upon the juſtice, or goodneſs of God, for there is no reaſon to be aſſigned why there ſhould not be as regular a gradation, from the firſt to the laſt, of every different ſpecies of rational beings, as there is ſuppoſed to be of *being*, as ſuch, abſtractedly conſidered, from the deity to the meaneſt reptile; and if every rational creature by making the beſt uſe of the capacity he is endowed with (whether that be an extenſive or a confined one) ſhall certainly attain the higheſt degree of felicity, his nature is capable of enjoying, can there remain any cauſe of complaint? and may not all who are perfectly happy be in one ſenſe ſaid to be equally ſo,

though not in the degree of happineſs yet in proportion to the power of enjoyment: and each be ſo perfectly ſatisfied as not to be able even to form a wiſh beyond what it poſſeſſes? thus a ſmall veſſel, though it contains not ſo much in quantity as a large one, is equally full when it can hold no more; and thus, the various diſpenſations of providence in the intellectual world are perfectly reconcilable to all the known attributes of the Deity. But on your ſuppoſition, "That all minds were originally formed with the ſame powers, and the ſame force or ſtrength of powers, and that the preſent apparent diverſities are owing to the different arrangement of matter, and the different modes

of

" of union between that and ſpirit" —It muſt be allowed that theſe different arrangements and modes of union, are an effectual bar to an equal exertion of their powers, from whence it muſt naturally follow, that, at the diſſolution of this union, thoſe minds who have been thus cloſely confined, and thereby rendered incapable of making any conſiderable improvements, muſt become moſt painfully ſenſible of their paſt diſadvantageous ſituation, and have a reaſonable cauſe to complain of the injuſtice done them by ſuch an impriſonment. Now that no rational creature ever can have a reaſonable cauſe to complain of the diſpenſations of providence is certain, conſequently this opinion, which gives an unan-

ſwerable one, cannot be founded on fact.

The long train of cauſes to which you afterwards aſſign the peculiarity of diſpoſition, if true, would amount to an evident proof that each peculiar diſpoſition (of which there are an endleſs variety) is ſo fixed by the unchangeable law of nature, or rather the will of God, as not to admit a poſſibility of being altered or corrected—If ſo, mankind are not free agents, can have no power of governing their own conduct, but are involuntarily led, by theſe diſpoſitions, into many wrong actions, for which, on ſuch a ſuppoſition, they cannot juſtly be accountable, or deſerve any puniſhment; neither any reward for

for a right behaviour owing merely to a more fortunate diſpoſition.—This being plainly contradictory to the chriſtian revelation, if one is true, the other muſt be falſe.

The caſes of Ideotiſm and Madneſs come next under conſideration. "No perſon, you ſay, will dream "of aſſerting that theſe are not the "effect of corporeal changes."—But in the former caſe, that of Ideotiſm, pray how is it to be proved that the animating principle is endued with any degree of rationality? If you anſwer, that the ſimilar effects which extreme old age have, ſometimes, produced in perſons who have in early life given proofs of ſtrong reaſon and lively genius, amount to a cer-

tainty that an alteration in the ſenſible ſyſtem *may* be the occaſion of Idiotiſm, it muſt be granted; but it does not follow from hence that it always proceeds from that cauſe: When produced by age the whole corporeal frame is viſibly decayed, the organs of ſenſation are no longer equal to the diſcharge of their proper functions; the nervous ſyſtem (originally formed to laſt but a determinate time) is worn out, and the man reduced to the weakneſs of infancy. The appearance of Idiotiſm here, therefore, may be juſtly imputed to an equal degree of weakneſs in the ſenſory, by which it is rendered incapable of either retaining the old, or receiving any new impreſſions; but this may alſo be morally accounted for: It

happens

happens not 'till the laſt ſtage of mortality, and, to the individual, may be a kind diſpenſation, not only by rendering him inſenſible of thoſe pains of body, which uſually attend the ſeparation of the ſoul from it, but as it may alſo ſave him from any uneaſy reflections that might poſſibly ariſe from the thought of loſing a companion to whom he had been too long, and intimately joined, not to eſteem as a part of himſelf; and theſe particular inſtances are certainly productive of general good, for there cannot be a more forcible argument for humility than what theſe melancholy changes afford, which all may live to undergo: beſides innumerable other advantages that may be drawn from the obſervation. No

part of this is applicable to thoſe who have always been Idiots; they daily encreaſe in ſtrength, and grow up to maturity, are in full health and vigour, the organs of ſenſation perfect, and frequently particularly ſuſceptible of impreſſions. When all the viſible parts of the corporeal ſyſtem thus appear to be in a ſtate of perfection, what reaſon is there to ſuppoſe that the ſenſory only is peculiarly weak, unleſs any ſuch weakneſs had been anatomically proved, but you ſay there never has yet been any ſymptoms of it diſcovered in diſſections, and on ſuch a ſuppoſition can any juſt cauſe be aſſigned why a rational mind ſhould be confined for a great number of years to a body ſo unfit for it's reception as to render

any

improvement, or exertion of it's faculties impoſſible? of what uſe then are thoſe faculties? or to what purpoſe given? Will you ſay the creative power was ever exerted to no end? and what end can be anſwered by the creation of a rational mind only to be thus impriſoned? Is it not, therefore, a much more probable opinion, that the animating principle which actuates the human ſhape in idiots is a ſeparate link in the great chain of being, and not endued with the ſame powers of reaſon given to the ſouls of other men? here it might be aſked of what uſe this link is? a certain anſwer is above the reach of finite capacities, but perhaps it might be neceſſary to make the regular gradation perfect—However, there is no abſurdity entail'd

tail'd by the ſuppoſition that I can perceive.

Madneſs is of a very different nature—If that is ever occaſioned by any diſorder of the body, it is much more frequently produced by an improper indulgence of the paſſions and affections of the mind. Ambition, pride, fear, love, and anger, have been ſeperately the cauſe; not from any tendency in the nature of either to ſuch a conſequence, but merely becauſe they have not been kept under proper regulations by the governing faculty of reaſon, which was endued originally with a ſufficient power to prevent the exceſſes productive of ſuch fatal effects; and for the culpable non-exertion of that power

power, may not the deprivation of it be the proper puniſhment?

The variation in the Nervous ſyſtem of theſe unfortunate people (which you prove by the neceſſity of giving a double quantity of medicine to act upon them) may be, moſt probably, occaſioned by the diſorder and confuſion of the mind; were it not ſo, theſe ſymptoms of an alteration in the body, or conſtitution, muſt firſt appear, and give warning of approaching madneſs; which I do not take to be the caſe.

The aſſiſtant forces of the great Mr. Lock, that you have called to your aid in the ſupport of your argument, have not yet beaten me from the

the field, though I acknowledge each of you ſeparately, to be far ſuperior to me both in underſtanding and knowledge, yet your united aſſertion, with all that has been hitherto alledged in defence of it, cannot make me aſſent to the truth of a propoſition, which every day's experience, of what paſſes in my own mind, contradicts: yet as there can be no probability of obtaining a victory with a ſtrength ſo inferior, I ſhall modeſtly retreat, that I may not incur the cenſure of raſhneſs by renewing the engagement, or oppoſing my ſingular opinion, unſuſtained by any powerful alliance, to the combined declarations of ſo many wiſe and learned men. Yet give me leave to obſerve, before I quit the ſubject, that

you

you ſeem to have been at ſome loſs for arguments to defend your hypotheſis, when you brought that ſucceſſion of Ideas, ariſing from material objects, and the variety of incidents following each other; by which the length or duration of Time may be meaſured, as a proof that Time is a material idea—for what has the method of meaſuring the length or duration of Time (or rather the method of conveying to another the notion of that length or duration) to do with the abſtracted idea of time itſelf? much the ſame difficulty you ſeem to labour under with regard to ſpace, by alledging the material idea of the boundaries thereof, to be *that* of the intermediate vacuity. On this head I

ſhall

ſhall only add—that whilſt my mind is conſcious of many ideas independent of, and unconnected with matter, which, conſequently, never could have been impreſſed on it by material objects, it will ſtrenuouſly maintain its own power of forming ſuch conceptions, which to itſelf is perfectly clear, tho' the communication of them is rendered impoſſible for want of illuſtrations, which in all caſes muſt, to be made intelligible to another, be taken from matter, and therefore, can in this be of no uſe.

My ſuppoſition, that the bodies of men might perhaps be animated by thoſe etherial beings who had fall'n from a ſtate of perfection was what, I told you, as mere theory, I ſhould

ſhould not attempt to defend againſt any objections that might be made to it; yet do I not ſee that you have urged any thing to leſſen the probability of ſuch a ſuppoſition. Admitting this to be the caſe, the different periods of youth and health, age and diſeaſe, or infirmity, are not to be ſeparately conſidered; but the whole life of man, with all its viciſſitudes of pain and eaſe, vexation and pleaſure taken together; and from thence the judgment muſt be formed:— Upon this principle the ſufferings of infants, which you aſk the cauſe of, who ſeem to come into the world for no end but to ſtruggle with a painful diſeaſe for ſome weeks, or months, and then go out of it again, may be rationally accounted for, by

ſup-

ſuppoſing their degree of guilt ſo ſmall in the pre-exiſting ſtate as not to have ſufficiently corrupted their minds to make a future ſtate of probation neceſſary, and therefore, that after the deprivation of happineſs for a determinate time, and the undergoing this poſitive puniſhment, they may be reſtored to their former ſtate of felicity. If the word puniſhment ſhould here be objected to, becauſe nothing can properly be call'd ſuch, which the ſufferer is not conſcious of, it may be anſwered, that though infants are not ſo at the time, they may afterwards be perfectly conſcious of theſe ſufferings, as well as the cauſe of them, and the remembrance thereof may be an effectual ſecurity againſt any future error or miſconduct.

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If you reject this opinion, and ſay, that rational ſouls were created on purpoſe to animate the ſickly bodies of theſe children for a few months, why were they endued with reaſon, when that reaſon could be of no ſort of uſe to them? and what ſtate can you ſuppoſe them qualified for on their removal from hence? incapable of doing either good or ill, they merit neither reward or puniſhment; and according to your hypotheſis, that the mind is nurtured by material Ideas wholly, and can be conſcious of none but what it received from material objects, theſe minds cannot have any, and muſt go into another world in, what may not improperly be called, a ſtate of idiotiſm.

Your queſtion whether the Deity interferes in regulating the œconomy of our bodies as to health, I will not anſwer in the affirmative; though in many caſes do not think ſuch an aſſertion either improbable, or at all derogatory to the divine nature. Thoſe diſeaſes brought on ourſelves by intemperance, or inherited from our parents, are ſo plainly the effects of a viſible cauſe, that nothing leſs than a miraculous exertion of almighty power could prevent them. In the caſe of epidemical diſtempers the cauſe is not ſo certain. Though they are generally ſuppoſed to be communicated by the air, yet it is a diſpute amongſt phyſicians how the air comes to be thus infectious; and admitting this to be the origin, to what

what cauſe muſt be imputed the importation of the plague from one kingdom to another? It has been ſaid to have been convey'd over half the globe by a letter, without the perſons receiving any infection who carried that letter. Is it to be ſuppoſed that the ſmall quantity of noxious air that could be ſealed up in this bit of paper, burſting forth on it's being open'd, like the fabled evils of Pandora's box, inſtantly contaminated the whole ſurrounding Atmoſphere; and with the ſwiftneſs of an eagle's flight, ſpread the dread peſtilence from town to town? I am not ſufficiently verſed in natural cauſes to aſſert, or deny the poſſibility of ſuch a conſequence; you beſt can decide that matter, but admitting it may be

thus accounted for, I confeſs, I am far from thinking it unreaſonable to ſuppoſe the immediate hand of heaven in ſuch national calamities; often have they proved a great check to vice and immorality, and produced a total change in the manners of a nation; and will you ſay that the extenſive encreaſe of virtue and happineſs in the rational creation, is not a cauſe worthy the interpoſition of almighty power?

Your deſcription of the riſe of ſtates, their growth, the progreſs of manners, and the encreaſe of knowledge, is ingenious, and for the moſt part juſt, but though it is granted that the improvements which one generation makes on the diſcoveries

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of another is the principal cauſe of the advancement of ſcience, it cannot from thence be inferr'd, that a man who has improved on the inventions of another had no innate ideas of his own, and therefore I ſee not how that makes for your argument.

Though I ſtill think that truth is on my ſide of the queſtion, I am convinc'd of my own inability to ſupport it with all that ſtrength of argument, which the ſubject, managed by an abler pen, would admit of, ſhall therefore drop the conteſt; but remember you are not to bear off the laurel, as I have not yet ſubſcribed to your opinion.

I ſhall expect to hear whether you continue equally pleaſed with the rural ſcene, and can with truth aſſure you, that an account of your health and happineſs will always give pleaſure to

Yours, &c.

LETTER VI.

To Miſs Louiſa ———

I Do not expect to have an hour to myſelf all this day, my dear Louiſa, but will make the moſt of my little time by commencing the performance of my promiſe; and when the poſt goes out ſhall ſend off what is wrote, however unconnected, without thinking it neceſſary to apologiſe for that, or an abrupt concluſion.

In every treatiſe on education that has fall'n in my way to peruſe, there has been ſome excellent rules

join'd to, what appear'd to me, many capital errors: I will not, therefore, pretend to determine which, upon the whole, may be call'd the beſt; but will venture to ſay, that a ſervile imitation of either muſt be injurious. Many ill conſequences have I ſeen ariſe from an injudicious adherence to all the directions of a favorite author, whoſe ſyſtem was, perhaps, authenticated to himſelf, by his own ſucceſs in one particular inſtance, to which it was peculiarly adapted; but apply'd to a thouſand others, might produce a thouſand different effects.

Some few general rules may be laid down that will equally ſuit all children in the earlieſt ſtage of infancy

fancy; but theſe ceaſe to be of uſe as ſoon as the temper, or rather natural diſpoſitions, can be diſcover'd; when thoſe inherent propenſities, thoſe prediſpoſitions, which every child may, I think, be ſaid to bring into the world with it, muſt be cloſely attended to, in order to form any advantageous plan of education. Theſe natural features of the mind are as various as thoſe of the face, and it is as difficult to find two children with whom exactly the ſame method of inſtruction, or the ſame ſort of correction will ſuit, as it is two conſtitutions that require exactly the ſame kind and quantity of food and medicine.

The main point, therefore, to be regarded in writing on this ſubject is to avoid advancing any maxims that, however good and uſeful they may be found in particular caſes, will not allow of a general application; and to keep ſo clear of all ambiguity of expreſſion, that the words made uſe of cannot poſſibly be taken in any ſenſe but that intended to be convey'd; as the greateſt miſchief muſt ariſe from the miſapplying, or miſunderſtanding of *rules*, which in that caſe become a ſanction to errors, becauſe the judgment, apt to reſt too ſecurely on thoſe it has once deliberately adopted, is often ſo prejudiced in favour of their utility as not to ſee the evident diſadvantages that muſt ariſe from a general and implicit obſervance

ſervance of thoſe particular directions, which may be as pernicious to one diſpoſition, as they are ſerviceable to another.

As a proof of this aſſertion, recollect the painful, and injurious, not to ſay cruel, ſcenes you have been witneſs to in the families of Lady L—, Mrs. I—, and your couſin F—, from a very injudicious application of thoſe rules, which, in a particular caſe, Mr. Locke might, perhaps, have found eminently uſeful.

Thus you ſee, my dear Louiſa, I have confin'd all the beneficial directions that the wiſeſt man cou'd give for the education of a child whoſe natural propenſities he knew nothing

nothing of, to thoſe very few certain invariable rules, which being equally adapted to all the human ſpecies cannot be miſapplied to any. This narrow field we ſhall ſoon travel over.

Let us begin with food and raiment, the two firſt things neceſſary. The former I know you will, if poſſible, adminiſter yourſelf in the manner nature has intended; where this happens, by ſome accident, to be impracticable, which is very rarely the caſe, cow's milk, diluted by water 'till it is brought to the ſame conſiſtence of the mother's, unmix'd either with flower, bread, biſcuit or ſugar, is by far the beſt ſubſtitute, and, as coming the neareſt to what

nature

nature intended, will agree the beſt with *every* conſtitution; in hot weather the milk ſhou'd be freſh drawn at leaſt once in eight hours, and never given warmer than it comes from the cow. The fineſt children I ever ſaw were rear'd in this manner; without once taſting any thing elſe for the firſt twelve months, and in a ſingle inſtance I knew it continued for eighteen months with equal ſucceſs. This method is undoubtedly preferable to the bare hazard of imbibing ill-humour, or diſeaſe, from a woman whoſe temper and conſtitution muſt be very imperfectly known: here a mother's cloſe inſpection is abſolutely neceſſary, it being almoſt impoſſible to make the lower claſs of people, who are hired to take the

the care of children, believe the utility of this uncommon method; and, conſequently, unleſs the moſt prudent precautions are taken to enforce the obedience of theſe orders it will be in vain to give them.

The cloathing of children ſhou'd, in this climate, at firſt be warm; if born in the ſummer it muſt not be leſſen'd till the return of hot weather after the enſuing winter, if in the winter, this may be done in the month of June following, provided the weather be ſeaſonable; and great care ſhou'd then be taken to abate the warmth of their cloathing ſo gradually, that the difference may be imperceptible to them. After it is thus reduced to a proper ſtandard

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(which in my own opinion can hardly be made too light, but in that you muſt judge for yourſelf) no alteration ſhou'd ever be made in conſequence of the changing Atmoſphere, but an exact equality in the warmth of their habit preſerved through every ſeaſon of the year, the utility of which will be proved by every experiment.

Many prudent alterations have of late years been made in the firſt dreſs of infants, but many more are yet wanting; the barbarous cuſtom of ſwathing is not yet univerſally exploded, and others little leſs injurious too generally retain'd; particularly that of dividing their garments into a multiplicity of pieces, which not only

only prolong the uneaſy ſenſation which to them always accompanies dreſſing, but by the unequal preſſure of different bandages their ſhape is often injured, and even their health impair'd; the whole of a child's firſt habit need conſiſt of no more than three pieces, viz. a ſhirt, a robe, and a cap; the two laſt ſhou'd be quilted of a proper thickneſs to be ſufficiently warm: the cap ſhou'd be faſten'd by a band of ſoft linen under the chin, ſew'd to one ſide of it and button'd on the other; if a knot is thought neceſſary for girls, that ſhou'd firſt be ſew'd on to the cap; the robe and ſhirt ſhou'd be made open before, the ſleeves put into each other, that both may be put on together; they muſt be wide enough in

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the back to prevent any difficulty in getting the laſt arm through: the robe ſhou'd lap over on the breaſt, and be faſten'd by flat buttons, placed at different diſtances, to make it more or leſs tight, which is preferable to ſtrings as being the quickeſt. By this method the whole buſineſs of dreſſing (which is evidently a moſt diſagreable operation to infants, and with which it has been cuſtomary to torment them for two hours at a time) may be diſpatch'd in two minutes, and in a manner ſo eaſy to themſelves as ſcarcely to occaſion a cry; which is a matter of much greater conſequence than it is generally thought. When they are coated this may be managed as expeditiouſly, and with as much

eaſe by tacking the petticoats and robe to the ſtays, which inſtead of lacing ſhou'd be button'd on; looſe plaits might hang from the top of the robe and fall over theſe buttons in ſuch a manner as to make a much prettier dreſs than that now uſed, and this continued for the firſt three or four years wou'd not only contribute much to the regularity of their growth, but alſo to the ſweetneſs of their temper, which early teazing is too apt to ſour.

The infamous cuſtom of bundling up infants in a parcel of cloaths intended to receive and retain all the evacuations of nature, and by which they are ſo confined as not to have any free motion of their limbs, very probably took its riſe as much from lazineſs as ignorance;

ignorance; for certain it is that a child, properly attended, may, within a month after its birth, be ſo managed as to make ſuch a precaution wholly unneceſſary. Inſtinct, in the firſt ſtage of infancy, is much the ſame in the human ſpecies as in the brute creation; you know how this matter is managed by the latter, their young know it alſo and always wait the directions given by the dam, who is too attentive to neglect the proper ſeaſons; in the ſame manner may children immediately be taught by certain ſigns, and by this means uſed to be perfectly cleanly from the firſt: thoſe who have been habituated to ſuch a method, if by chance left too long will indicate their wants in the moſt expreſſive manner, and repeat

that indication 'till they are attended to; from hence it is evident, that any inconveniencies of this ſort may be prevented by proper management, without having recourſe to a method as injurious as it is offenſive.

With regard to diet, I know not that any particular regimen, after children are paſt the ſtate of infancy, is abſolutely neceſſary; the moſt plain and ſimple kinds are certainly beſt, if for no other reaſon than becauſe they will not be tempted to eat too much, which, in every period of life, is the baneful ſource of innumerable diſeaſes; to regulate the quantity is, I believe, much more material than the quality, of their food; it will contribute much

much to their health to bring them early to three or four regular meals in a day, without giving them any thing to eat in the intermediate ſpace; becauſe, by continually throwing in new matter, the regular courſe of digeſtion is interrupted, the tone of the ſtomach weaken'd, and a bad chyle produced. Water is the beſt liquor, and in all the little complaints they are incident to, water-gruel and abſtinence are generally better remedies than medicine. Worms they will eſcape being troubled with, if they have but a ſmall quantity of fruit, and that perfectly ripe; under which reſtrictions they may very ſafely be permitted to have ſome of every kind in its ſeaſon.—So much for the body.—We come next

to the mind, but that, my dear Louiſa, muſt be the ſubject of another Letter, to this I can only add, that I am much pleaſed with your remarks on Alphonſo's adventures, and that the viſible improvement of your underſtanding and judgement daily encreaſes the approbation and eſteem of

Your moſt affectionate, &c.

The Adventures of ALPHONSO *continued.*

HAD you been at home on that dreadful day, you would inſtantly have convey'd your wife and children from the horrors of the trembling town, with only thoſe moſt valuable effects that each could take without impeding their flight. Having happily gain'd the adjacent fields, theſe would have appear'd to you ſo incommodious and unſafe for Artimiſſa to paſs the night in, that, by the offer of a very conſiderable reward, you wou'd have procured a Berlin to convey her to your uncle's. In the foreſt, through which you muſt neceſſarily have paſs'd, you

would have been attack'd by a ſtrong banditti, overpower'd, diſarm'd, led into the thickeſt part of the wood, and bound to a tree; from whence your eyes had been tortur'd with the ſight of every inſult that could be offer'd to the lovely Artimiſſa, and your eldeſt daughter, whoſe tender age would not have protected her from the violation of the ruffians; who, regardleſs of the cries and entreaties of the unhappy victims, would each in turn have ſatiated his brutal appetite, and after ſtripping and binding them and the two children to ſeparate trees, in the ſame manner they had done yourſelf and ſervants, would have made off with their booty undiſcover'd.

Before any perſon would have paſs'd within hearing of your cries, the beauteous infant, cruelly depriv'd of it's mother's care, wou'd, before her eyes, have periſh'd by nocturnal damps and want of ſuſtenance; ſhe pierc'd to the ſoul by the ſound of it's pitious cries, and unable to ſupport the ſight of its diſtreſs, would have exhauſted her ſtrength in fruitleſs attempts to break the cruel bands that withheld her from flying to it's relief; this, added to the anguiſh of the preceding ſcene, would have been too much for her tender and delicate frame, and you muſt have ſuſtain'd the additional torment of ſeeing the dear object of your tendereſt love expire in agonies inconceivable, almoſt within reach of your

your arm, without a poſſibility of mitigating her anguiſh, or receiving the melancholy conſolation of one laſt embrace. Hardly would your reaſon have maintain'd it's ſeat againſt the dreadful ſhock, and for a time your wild deſpair had bordered ſo near on madneſs as ſcarcely to have been diſtinguiſh'd from it. In this ſituation you would have been found by a party of ſoldiers in purſuit of miſcreants, who taking advantage of the general confuſion, had plunder'd the ſufferers; but by this time your eldeſt boy would have been reduc'd by the fright, to a ſtate of idiotiſm.

This, Alphonſo, I foreſaw muſt be the inevitable conſequence of your ſtay

ſtay in Liſbon, without a poſſibility of my being then able to prevent it, becauſe your fears for Artimiſſa would have operated more forcibly in favour of the fatal journey, than any contrary impreſſions I had permiſſion to make on your mind. In caſes of this nature our only method of guarding our charge from the fore ſeen evil, is by a prior ſuggeſtion; for this purpoſe I urged the viſit to your friend, ſucceeded to my wiſh, and by that means you eſcap'd the horrors of a ſcene that would have baffled the united force of your philoſophy and religion. I perceive the ſilent gratitude that fills your ſoul at the knowledge of the unutterable miſery you have eſcap'd; you now behold with thankfulneſs a cataſtrophy you late

late regarded as the worſt of human evils, and can even think with pleaſure on a ſeparation that, however grievous at the time to yourſelf, protected the lovely Artimiſſa, and her beauteous progeny, from a fate more dreadful than the moſt painful death; and you from the inconceivable horror of impotently beholding all the dear objects of your tendereſt affection reduc'd to a ſtate of ſuch unparallel'd diſtreſs. You are now convinc'd with how much truth ſhe, in the viſion of the night, aſſured you that the event you then ſo bitterly lamented, ought to be acknowledg'd with gratitude, as to her the kindeſt diſpenſation, who now enjoys a bliſs ineffable, which you, after having fulfill'd on earth the time allotted for your

your farther probation, may partake reunited in a ſtate of happineſs that admits not of viciſſitude.

From the moment that you was alarm'd by the trembling of the earth to that wherein you ſlept in the tent, the agitation of your mind was too violent to allow the poſſibility of your paying any attention to my admonitions. This was the firſt time, during my whole attendance on you, that I ever found it neceſſary to ſummons a foreign aid: you were then ſo totally diſcompos'd that I even fear'd the ſucceſs of that, but inſtantly call'd the guardian of Rodolphus, whoſe pious council prevented the raſh execution of your fatal purpoſe.

Calm'd

Calm'd by the favourable viſion preſented to your imagination while ſleeping in the tent with the good old man, you became again capable of receiving my impreſſions. I recall'd to your remembrance in the moſt lively colours the preceeding dream, and ſtrongly inforc'd a ſenſe of the indiſpenſible duty of an abſolute reſignation to the will of the great diſpoſer of all events, whoſe benevolence delights in the good of his obedient creatures, and whoſe infinite wiſdom can never err in chooſing the moſt proper and certain method of effecting it. Your ſoul acquieſced in this undeniable truth, yet in ſpight of your utmoſt efforts, an unconquerable gloom oppreſs'd your ſpirits, while reflecting

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on the melancholy change that a few days had made in your ſituation. The fervent prayer you then offer'd for divine aſſiſtance to ſupport your ſorrows, and ſuppreſs every repining thought, was favourably heard, and I receiv'd command to lead you hither, with an unuſual permiſſion, to uſe any compulſive operations on your mind that ſhould be neceſſary to reduce you to a ſtate wherein you might be made acquainted with truths that have never yet been reveal'd to mortals, of a nature that will effectually ſilence every riſing doubt — Yours, Alphonſo, have ever been thoſe of a mind wholly occupied by the deſire of paying an unreſerved obedience to the will of it's Creator, and never, in any inſtance, aroſe

from

from a vicious inclination; that, oppoſing the precepts of a pure religion, is often moſt ingenious in raiſing objections to the authenticity of thoſe commands which lay a reſtraint on the wiſh'd indulgence.

Your ſteady piety has been beheld with approbation, your former cauſeleſs fears, and preſent anguiſh, with indulgent pity; and moſt highly favour'd are you by the commiſſion I have receiv'd to give you a ſight of what paſſes in the planet you inhabit, and to ſhew you our operations on the mind of man, which are imperceptible to all whoſe views are circumſcrib'd by the material organs of ſight. To capacitate you for this diſcovery it was neceſſary to free your

your corporeal part from all thoſe groſs particles which ſo cloud your organs of ſight as to prevent their diſcernment of ſpirit. For that purpoſe I directed your ſteps this way, and with a force irreſiſtible, impel'd you to enter the chaſm, here, turning your thoughts on a ſubject that totally engaged them, I threw you into a reverie, and ſupply'd matter for your uninterrupted meditation, 'till ſeven days had elapſed without your being at all conſcious of their paſſing; by this time all the groſs parts of your corporeal ſyſtem were exhaled, your ſtrength was exhauſted and your debilitated body being no longer able to maintain it's functions, ceaſed to be a convenient receptacle for the immaterial principle, and a

diſſolution of the union was on the point of enſuing. In this ſtate, the ſolid film that bounds the mortal viſual ray, and like an impenetrable veil, renders all but material objects inviſible to the ſight of man, was refin'd to ſo perfect a tranſparency as no longer to obſtruct your view, and when, at the repeated ſound of your name, you rais'd with difficulty your cloſing eyelids, I ſtood confeſs'd before you. You ſaw alſo the tranſlucent ſubſtance that inſtantly reſtor'd your ſtrength and vigour: This was that celeſtial light, or pure uncorruptible Æther, by which all beings, (the one ſelf-exiſtent only excepted) are ſuſtain'd. The material food, by which the life of man is ſuppoſed to be ſupported, owes all it's invigorat-

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ing powers to this celeſtial Æther, of which it is only the vehicle; 'tis the courſeneſs of that vehicle which renders him mortal; during infancy and youth this material part facilitates his growth, and gives ſtability to his frame, but when no longer required for this purpoſe, the daily relicts, accumulating by degrees, firſt cauſe imbecility by impeding, and at length mortality, by totally obſtructing the operation of this vital principle.

Had mankind been virtuous, temperate, and regular, diſeaſe had been unknown, and an eaſy gentle decay thus introduc'd would have been the uſual method of diſſolution; death then had never worn that garb of terror, which vice alone has wove,

but would from all have met a friendly welcome, as a kind deliverer from the burthen of age and weakneſs. The immenſe benevolence that occaſion'd the creation of this planet for the probation of man, ſurpaſſes all comprehenſion; miriads of of happy beings beheld his amazing compoſition with aſtoniſhment, adored the goodneſs that contriv'd, and the wiſdom and power that formed the ſyſtem; by a virtuous conduct here, he may ſecure to himſelf perfect and eternal happineſs in that better ſtate, to which a truly natural death is a moſt eaſy, and quiet paſſage, attended with no other ſenſations than thoſe of cloſing the eyes to ſleep. To be capable of virtue Man muſt be free, the abuſe of that

freedom

freedom is vice, and the reſult of perſiſting in it unutterable miſery. Without paſſions and corporeal ſenſations he could have no enjoyment here; the unlimited indulgence and gratification of thoſe is the ſource of all the evils he now groans beneath; to keep theſe neceſſary paſſions and ſenſations, under a proper regulation, a ſufficient degree of reaſon was imparted to him; by neglecting the dictates of this governing principle he has introduc'd a general confuſion, and expos'd himſelf to every poſſible inconvenience and diſtreſs. The conſciouſneſs of wrong action ſubjected him to the fear of puniſhment, this engender'd ſuperſtition; and the follies and miſeries produc'd by that are innumerable.

This will be illuſtrated to you by examples in thoſe ſcenes I am permitted to preſent to your view. You are now fit to accompany me, your body ſo ſpiritualized that you can aſcend with me, and ſuſpend yourſelf in air; hitherto, continued he, I have aſſum'd a human form, as moſt familiar to you, now behold me as I am. — Then ſtarting from the ground he ſhook his auburn locks, that ſhed perfumes more ſweet than India's ſpice, and in a moment diſappear'd, when the celeſtial light again ſurrounded me, as before, accompanied with the ſame delightful ſenſation.

LETTER VII.

To Mrs. P——

MADAM,

THE ſenſible pleaſure your laſt letter afforded me was mixed with no trifling degree of concern, occaſion'd by your declared reſolution not to maintain, any longer, a diſpute which has already afforded me much entertainment and inſtruction; and has brought me to a ſtate of doubt but not ſatisfaction; which, without affectation, may proceed from my being ſome ſteps in the ſcale of ra-

tional creatures below my antagoniſt in refinement of ſentiment.

My good friend has had a ſevere return of his painful complaint; he has certainly more true philoſophy than half mankind; how few would ſubmit with any degree of patience to his evils! how apt are men either under painful diſeaſes, or diſtreſſing circumſtances, to cry out againſt the Deity! and with equal ignorance and impiety aſſert, that a benign and generous being could not afflict his creatures; thus imputing injuſtice or malevolence to that God who is infinite in all perfection, or denying his exiſtence altogether; horrid ſuppoſitions both, and in my opinion equally abſurd.

Thoſe

Thoſe who impute the evils of life to want of power in the Deity, or ſay that there is any other being, or exiſting body in the univerſe, which withſtands the potence of God, ſelf-exiſtent, make our creator imperfect, and ſtrike off his omnipotence.

There ſeems to me to be two grand purpoſes deſign'd by what we call the natural evils of life—Firſt, to make the picture of the univerſe compleatly beautiful. Secondly, to oblige man to ſtep above brutes, and be the rational creature. The foundation of beauty is variety—The curve line is the moſt ſimple object of beauty—To make a ſtrait line, mathematical points muſt be depoſited ſide by ſide, in one direction, at equal diſtances,

diſtances; in every curve thoſe points vary their diſtance and diſpoſition; now there is a certain quantity of variety which conſtitutes true beauty.—Let us compare the univerſe to a picture. we ſhall ſee it's objects ſo diſpoſed, that there are lights and ſhadows in progreſſive order; in our ſyſtem inert earth riſes into chryſtals of organic ſhape, ſome chryſtals ſo ramify that they ape the vegetable, ſome vegetables increaſe ſo ſlowly that they may be reſembled to the higheſt of the laſt rank, different only in life. Again, the firſt in the claſs of vegetables has ſenſation, while the loweſt of animals has little more: through the brute creation we may view the gradual ſteps of reaſon:—Man no doubt is the gradation

tion between them and the loweſt order of ſuperior beings.

To keep up the beauty of the univerſe, to keep up the ſhade of beings, the omnipotent creates us in this imperfect ſtate; conſiſtent conduct will, hereafter, meet with a juſt reward.—This is probably ſufficient to account for natural evil; but let us carry on our enquiry.

Would man be a rational creature without what we call evils? I believe not.—You, I know, will not allow the abſence of innate ideas, however, moſt certainly will not deny that indulged paſſion, or the prejudices of education, may ſmother them.—Had man been created with his preſent powers

powers, ſenſations and paſſions, the purple grape, ready to meet the hand for his repaſt, no thiſtle to choke his harveſt, no poiſon to diſturb his fruits, the gates of ſtorm always locked, and the ſunſhine of heaven continually breathing ſerenity in his atmoſphere, and diffuſing vigour through his ſyſtem; wou'd he do more than eat, ſleep and indulge? I think not, the depth of his mind would never have been known, while the brute had grown on the ſleeping Man: Exertion whets the powers of our mind, nay, one would almoſt ſay it creates them; was there no need of exertion, there would be none.— Without exertion there would be no reaſon.—Neceſſity, as the proverb truly ſays, is the mother

of

of invention—So juſtly may it be ſaid, that evil is the parent of happineſs; ſhallow ſighted and ſuperficial then are the ſceptical philoſophers, (if I may give them that name) who call theſe ſpurs to wiſdom, evils.—Were there no poiſons, would the properties of plants be known? were there no diſeaſes, would the nature of this creature man and this globe be ſtudied?—In ſhort, without evils we ſhould never ſearch for ideas, and as that man has moſt wiſdom who has moſt ideas, the evils of life are the fountains of wiſdom, and wiſdom the fountain of happineſs.

I ſhall make no kind of apology for troubling you with my hypotheſes, I have your permiſſion to indulge them

them, beſides, 'tis a point that I know you are much intereſted in, and therefore will not be diſpleaſed at the intention: Shall be glad if it produces a more perfect ſolution from yourſelf; as you perhaps may ſtart objections that have not occurred to me. If women were properly educated, I mean qualified to obey the laws of nature—their office, I think, would be to ſtart hypotheſes to men, whoſe ſlower abilities might lop off the luxuriances, and ſubtract the real truths: but the caſe is quite different between us, I ſend you the luxuriant tree, and expect it to be pruned by your more correct judgment. I am, with the ſincereſt eſteem, Madam,

Your obedient
and obliged ſervant, &c.

LETTER VIII.

From the ſame.

To Mrs. P ——

MADAM,

I Wrote to you the 25th of the laſt month, but have not yet received any anſwer, and knowing your great punctuality in matters of this ſort, am apprehenſive that ſome accident may have happen'd either to your letter or mine; God forbid a more ſerious interruption of our correſpondence by a return of your late illneſs; be ſo good to favour me with a line by the return

return of the poſt, to remove theſe doubts which now perplex me.

The country grows every day more delightful, and I am pleaſed with a retirement where my occupations are more ſuited to my taſte than in town. The accurate obſervation of vegetables and inſects pleaſe, amaze, and enlarge my mind. For different hours, different ſtudies are allotted: botany, chemiſtry, mathematics, the belle letter, &c. take their turn: I have found, by experience, that changing the mode of application relieves the mind almoſt as much as a total relaxation, and if a variety of ſtudies may be made to anſwer the end of amuſement, how much time may we gain for the advancement

of

of knowledge! but can the mind, ſay you, comprehend ſuch a multiplicity of ſubjects? All ſubjects, Madam, from the œconomy of the Heavens, to the mixing a ſallad, are but parts of the ſame ſubject—We have but two objects of enquiry, ſpirit and matter— the whole variety conſiſts in the modifications.—Subjects, however ſeemingly different, are illuſtrative of each other — arithmetic and chymiſtry, or the laws of reaſon and matter, proceed on the ſame principles—Arithmetic has but two fundamental rules, addition and ſubſtraction—As multiplication is a compound of addition, ſo are diviſion, reduction, &c. &c. at the bottom all turn upon theſe two principles, compoſition, and decompoſition,

which are the firſt laws of chymiſtry —and arithmetic is the law of reaſoning.— Again,— the doctrine of ſound and light, move on the ſame fundamentals—There is a harmony of ſounds, and there is a harmony of colours, and both may be ſaid to conſiſt in the juſt conjunction of thirds—fifths—and eights; in ſhort, Madam, the whole may be reduced to this; our conſtitution is capable of a certain number of ſenſations, each of which is attended with ſuch a poſitive quantity of pleaſure, or agreeable feeling.—All ſubjects conſiſt of a certain number of modes, and agree with each other in thoſe modes—To continue one of the illuſtrations I ſelected above.— The harmony of colours and ſounds.—The pleaſure

felt

felt by the nerve is ſeemingly of the ſame kind in both, ſpeaking generally; and here it is very difficult to be underſtood, particular conſtitutions having encouraged habits, and broke moſt natural ſenſations; and the feelings from diſcord in colour or ſound, may be of the ſame kind; there is often, if not always, a certain degree of pain excited in the idea of the ſublime.—A certain arrangement of really diſconſonant ſounds ſtrikes us with that ſenſation; and it is not in landſkip the melting down of one ſmall object into another that excites that feeling, it is a certain tranſition from light to ſhadow that muſt create it: ſo in dancing, the barely graceful is not the ſublime, (for the ſublime is certainly to be found there as well as

the comic and burleſque) it conſiſts in bold, and varied motions, many neither beautiful nor natural, but all to be attended with ſomewhat of the amazing.—In ſhort, I think it may be proved that to know one thing well, we muſt know ſomewhat of moſt things, and that a ſketch of univerſal knowledge is ſo difficult as imagined, I can by no means conceive. —Remember Lord Bacon, Madam, immerſed in the buſineſs of the ſtate, —a Lord Chancellor of England in a troubleſome reign—diſturbed with ill health, and teazed with party feuds and private contentions, and yet obſerve him wading through the follies of Ariſtotle, ſee him take the knowledge of the world, and mould the whole Chaos into one connected

ſyſtem.

ſyſtem.—Do not imagine that I have the vanity to preſume myſelf a Bacon, the difference is as great as between the ſun and one of Saturn's Satellites; he ſhone by his own light, I perhaps by a borrowed one.

From the whole then, Madam, I would draw this concluſion, that to allow the mind fair play, is to ſhake off prejudices—to allow it to look on all ſides; not to barricade it on the right hand or the left: when it has once obtained a general view, it's own curioſity will prompt it to a particular one. We have no abſolute evidence, ſays Malbranche, without knowing every ſide of every fact; and I think no man can reaſon accurately on ſpirit who is ignorant of matter, or pre-

tend to explain the laws of matter without having ſtudied what is known of ſpirit, and theſe are of all others different. From hence I conclude, that a ſketch of univerſal knowledge is neceſſary to the underſtanding, perfectly, any ſingle branch of ſcience, and hope you will not cenſure me as ſtraying from my own particular province, while I am endeavouring to improve the ſcience my ſtudies are peculiarly adapted to by the aſſiſtance of thoſe lights that may be thrown on it from the more accurate knowledge of others.

I had almoſt forgot to tell you, that by allowing part of the afternoon to the ſtudy of hiſtory, I am alſo encreaſing my acquaintance with men

and

and manners. This ſort of reading by no means compliments human nature; pride, ſelfiſhneſs and revenge, form empires, which are again thrown down by luxury. One age toils to obtain knowledge, and the next loſes it; particular paſſions prevail in particular reigns, which bury in oblivion all others. Different religions have introduced prejudices, Enthuſiaſms, and Scepticiſms; different ſyſtems of philoſophy have confuſed truth, and univerſal deceit ſo undermined it, that if all the actions and principles of men could be thrown into one view, the fancied Chaos would have leſs confuſion in it. When one looks over, in half an hour, the lives and conduct of millions, one cannot help reſembling

them to mites ſtruggling in a ſun beam for the brighteſt place: but though folly ſeems to demand the firſt place in the conduct of human affairs, and we ſee ten to one paſs through life without ever thinking, yet virtue when it has ſtruggled through the prejudices of cuſtom, wiſdom through Enthuſiaſm, and knowledge through the clouds of falſe hypotheſes, appear with the brighteſt luſtre, and demand all that ſtudy and deference which the true followers of them have ſhewn.

The amuſement that employs my evening care I am impatient to deſcribe to you, it is of the ſame claſs with that of Adam in paradiſe, and and of all others the moſt agreeable,

I mean

I mean, the laying out, according to the laws of nature and conſequently beauty, a ſpot where

The rude bramble, with it's thorny coat,
Scatter'd abroad it's wild luxuriant ſtems,
Choaking the ſilver primroſe as it ſmiled,
With pearly dew drop in it's ſilken cup.
Where ſcraggling ſloes their ebon branches ſpread,
Where hollow oaks, with mould'ring broken ſtems,
Support the varniſhed ivy in it's courſe,
While little oaklings ſtruggle thro' the briar;
Where the bird cherry, dreſs'd with flowers of ſnow,
The haughty elm with manly branches bends:
Where gentle woodbind, delicate and ſweet,
Seeks a ſupport from hawthorn, aſh, or oak,
Like the fair creature formed of Adam's Rib,
From the more bold and ſturdy of the race,
In charms inferior, though the firſt in ſtrength.

Where ragged rocks with broken hollows nod,
And noiſy waters ruſh precipitantly down
From ſtone to ſtone, from root to ſtone again,
Now gliding through a ſmooth and pebbly bed,
Now bubbling hoarſe and ſtrong.

Where

Where the deep ſhade and pathleſs daiſied vale
Tempt butterflies to ſpend their nightly hours
In flow'ry roſe or foxglove ; or where bats
Their circling journeys take, and when the Sun
In Capricorn enlivens all the ſouth,
In hollow trees or rockey caverns ſleep.
Where the grave Linnet and the golden finch
Pour, undiſturbed, their harmony divine,
While Zephyrs catch the ſounds, and mingle them
With thoſe of falling waters, ruſtling groves,
Lark, throſtle, blackbird, and the hollow baſe
Of rook or crow, to make the concert ſtill
Superior to Italian art, or Handel's ſtroke.

To this ſweet ſpot, the parent God of ſpring,
Fair botany, with crown of Caltha gay,
Led her young ſcholar to defend the cauſe
Of hidden beauty, to diſplay to view
Her various plants, and prove their deſtin'd uſe.

Here through the brambly paths I force my way,
Drag honey-ſuckles chained in ſloe or thorn,
From theſe unſeemly unadorned allies,
And wind them careleſs with the circling ſtem
Of wandring Ivy dreſſing ragged oaks.

Or crop luxuriant branches from the roſe,
Bending it's boughs as fancy may direct;
Or mingling jeſſamine, ſoft pliant ſhrub,
In beautiful embrace.

Nor do I let the hedge row, rank and wild,
Revel in hair bell, cowſlip, or the purple bluſh
Of ſoft veronice; but theſe oftimes I ſteal,
And mingling them with moſs, my banks adorn.

Naiads and water nymphs, with dewey robes,
Your aid I aſk'd, nor have I aſk'd in vain,
You taught me how to guide the noiſy ſtream
And tumble in caſcade below caſcade,
Through moſs-grown craggy clifts and mouldring banks.

Nor has the rocky cavern been forgot,
Where fable ſays, the dropping mermaid combs
Her emerald locks; for here with roots and moſs,
Variety of ſhells and glitt'ring rock,
I've made a grot for contemplation ſweet:
And here, cool ſhelter'd from the mid-day ſun,
This friendly office, correſpondence rich,
To me at leaſt, I happy now indulge.

Hark!—In the noiſe of yonder falling ſtream
The muſes ſyren ſpeaks.———

Calls

Calls fancy from the cloſet of the mind,
Where, in mechanic dull, it's chain'd through life,
But being wak'd, each ſhrub or opening plant
Dreſſes itſelf in other robes, new charms,
Gay beauties, hidden from the vulgar eye.
Soft magic welcome, welcome angel dream,
Unclog me quick, and let me far expand;
Off with the fetters that confine each ſenſe,
And if innate ideas are depoſed
Conceal'd in ſome warm corner of my mind,
Expand them quick, for fain would I be thought
Deep and refin'd enough for Myra's pen.

Ye rocks that ſeem to nod with craggy heads,
Whoſe hollow caverns ſhaggy roots ſupport,
With all your horrors raiſe me to ſublime,
Give we ideas ſtrong, majeſtic, juſt.——'

This rural ſcene, I believe, has carried me too far, I have already intruded too much on your patience, and muſt break off abruptly, but I comfort myſelf that you will forgive me, ſaying of you as Milton does of his Lycidas. So with all due regard I ſubſcribe myſelf, Madam, your moſt oblig'd, &c.

LETTER IX.

To Mrs. G——

I Did not recollect, 'till after my laſt letter was diſpatched, the promiſe of encloſing another from the old gentleman; it ſhall be ſent this evening; you will find it only another picture of the ſame good heart of which the invariable bent appear'd in every action, and almoſt in every ſentence that eſcaped him.

Your obſervations on my friend's poetry are very juſt, and I am pleaſed that you have found out ſome beauties that were not diſcover'd by me; thoſe

ſcraps

ſcraps appeared ſo little to the credit of her genius, that nothing but the ſtrong inclination you expreſſed to ſee the ſtile of her early religious epiſtles, would have induced me to write out what my memory retained of them; on my word that will not ſupply me with another line, or you ſhould not aſk twice for it; I have ſome where the copy of a hymn, which, if I can find, will ſend you.

I think my laſt letter left off with her reſolution rather to run the hazard of any uſe that might be made of her letters, than try to recover them by a reconciliation with a man whom ſhe moſt heartily deſpiſed for having theaten'd ſuch a piece of revenge; before, he was indifferent, but

but now, became her averſion ; and to have ſeemed commonly civil to him would have been a ſpecies of deceit that ſhe could not practice. She wrote however once more to demand the reſtoration of her former letters, by the bearer, and was anſwer'd by a verbal meſſage, that he would deliver them into her own hands, if permitted to ſee her alone, but to no other perſon ; this was refuſed, for having never yet ſeen him but in public company, (a rule that was invariably obſerved with all her lovers) ſhe would not depart from it even on this occaſion.—Thus they remained with him, and ſhe flatter'd herſelf into an opinion, that he could not poſſibly deſcend to the mean revenge he had threaten'd, but in this was miſtaken.

miſtaken. A few days after the gentleman diſappear'd, and a friend of his was commiſſioned to hand about theſe papers in every company; he perform'd the office with a malicious pleaſure, and the addition of every ſarcaſtical reflection, in a room full of company, amongſt whom was an old gentleman who had much penetration, ſaw into my friend's character, eſteemed her good qualities, and was hurt by the indulgence of follies that ſo much obſcured them, he took her part with warmth; repreſented to him the meanneſs of executing a low revenge for a friend who was aſhamed to appear in it himſelf, and added, that the young men of his days would have thought it an indelible ſtain on their honour to have act-

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ted ſo ungenerous a part by any lady.

This good old gentleman immediately informed her of the uſe that was making of her letters; blamed her greatly for having wrote them, though he ſaid that, excluſive of a few epithets, they were in themſelves unexceptionable, and might be printed: but the carrying on any ſuch correſpondence was inexcuſable, and imputed it wholly to the vanity of writing well; he adviſed her, to get theſe papers again into her own poſſeſſion, if poſſible, and never to put it in the power of another to ſerve her in the ſame manner. Her rea-

ſon aſſented to his opinion, ſhe promiſed to follow his prudent advice and went immediately to a man of great power and conſequence, related to him the whole affair, and entreated his aſſiſtance to recover her letters. Here again ſhe was ſeverely reprimanded, and told that a perſon who could make ſo ill a uſe of ſo good an underſtanding ought to ſuffer the conſequences. However, at length he promiſed his aſſiſtance, went immediately to the gentleman and got the papers reſtored to her, but this could not ſilence the reports that were induſtriouſly propagated to her diſadvantage, and founded on too much reaſon; for it muſt be owned, that no part of her conduct in this affair

was juſtifiable. I have not here a word to urge in her defence, but that ſhe was very young, extremely thoughtleſs, foreſaw not the conſequences, and was afterward ſo ſenſible of the error as never again to be guilty of the ſame fault; I mean, never but this once carried on an affair of this nature ſo far as to make the breaking it off deſerve ſo harſh a name as this merited. I could wiſh to bury a circumſtance I ſo thoroughly diſapprove, in eternal oblivion, but a regard to truth will not ſuffer me to ſuppreſs or extenuate it.

When the letters could no more be produced, the ſame ſpirit of reſentment ſhew'd itſelf in a few ſcurrilous lines; luckily they contained

neither ſatyr or wit; and were too low a kind of abuſe to gratify the general love of ſcandal, or do the injury intended.

This ſtory no ſooner reached the ears of Prudentia, than ſhe made uſe of it for the purpoſe it was ſo well calculated to ſerve, and again endeavour'd to prevail with Mr. M— to lay ſome reſtraint on his daughter's liberty, and to permit a conſtant watch to be kept on her actions.

A conſequence drawn on herſelf by imprudence, ſhe ought certainly to have ſubmitted to with patience, and very probably might, from a juſt ſenſe of the error, had ſhe looked on it as her father's proper act; but regarding

garding him as under the influence of Prudentia, whoſe judgment in all ſuch matters ſhe with reaſon heartily deſpiſed, the thought of ſubmitting was inſupportable. Here, could my friend have played the hypocrite, ſhe might inſtantly have thrown off the yoke; to have put on the appearance of that religious turn which was ſometimes real, ſtaid at home a good deal, and converſed with her father in his own way, would preſently have regained all her influence over him, diſpoſſeſſed his miſtaken adviſer of the power newly acquired, and eſtabliſhed her own on a foundation that nothing could have ſhaken; tho' ſhe evidently foreſaw the certain ſucceſs that muſt attend this method, yet not feeling any tendency, at this time, to

ſuch a diſpoſition, was above the meanneſs of practiſing deceit; and choſe rather a warm and open oppoſition to the old gentlewoman's plan; by which the intended reſtraint on her liberty was, for that time, prevented; but the indefatigable induſtry of this officious Duenna and her ſpies, in obſerving and cenſuring the gaiety of my friend's conduct, and their happy talent of placing every trifling circumſtance in the moſt diſadvantageous light to her father, in the end accompliſhed the deſign.

Her perfect knowledge that emiſſaries were continually placed upon the watch to carry intelligence, far from producing a greater degree of prudence and circumſpection to diſappoint

appoint their intentions, encreaſed her natural giddineſs and apparent diſſipation; and, from a ſpirit of oppoſition, ſhe ſhewed more levity than ever in her general behaviour, which afforded them all the advantages againſt herſelf that could be wiſhed; and I am convinced that ſhe then ran into many little indiſcretions for no other reaſon but to ſhew her contempt of their conſtant obſervation.

Of this I will give you only one inſtance. Amongſt the tales they were continually carrying to Mr. M—— he was told that his daughter was in love with, and received the addreſſes of an officer, whoſe character was ſo bad that no woman of reputation would be ſeen in his company. To

this man ſhe had, in reality, never ſpoken three ſentences, and theſe merely accidental, in a general converſation with other people. She diſliked, and had avoided him as much as common civility would permit; and having, by this aſſurance, removed the apprehenſion that had been inſtilled into the father, all had been well could ſhe have ſuppreſſed her reſentment for an inſinuation as falſe, and as much to the diſadvantage of her underſtanding and judgment, as that formerly thrown out with regard to the ſhepherd. — This was wounding her in the tendereſt part, ſhe loſt all patience, loudly complained of the ill offices that were continually doing her, by miſrepreſentations and falſe aſſertions; and ſcru-

pled

pled not to declare, that a continuance of ſuch treatment would infallibly drive her to diſpoſe of herſelf in that imprudent manner, they again pretended to fear, without the leaſt foundation; and, ſhould this prove the caſe at laſt, the old gentlewoman muſt take the blame upon herſelf for having made her preſent ſituation ſo perfectly diſagreeable, that it ſeemed hardly poſſible to exchange it for a worſe; by this means ſhe imagined, that if theſe people really wiſhed her welfare, and were only miſtaken in the method of promoting it, they would be afraid of purſuing a conduct that might urge to this extremity; to encreaſe the apprehenſions intended to be raiſed by her declaration, ſhe very imprudently ſhew'd

a par-

a particular attention to the officer above mentioned, regardleſs of ſo diſadvantageous an appearance to herſelf. The effect was directly oppoſite to her expectation; Prudentia, now full of reſentment, warmly urged the neceſſity of laying an abſolute reſtraint on her liberty, on pretence of preventing the execution of theſe threats; her late behaviour to the captain was alledg'd as a proof of ſuch an immediate deſign: His character was painted in ſo vile and infamous a light, that her good father ſhudder'd at the bare poſſibility of her being united to ſuch a wretch, and laid his commands on her not to ſtir out of his houſe without leave, and at the ſame time declared ſhe ſhould never obtain that again, to go to any public aſſem-

aſſembly; that he ſhould diſpoſe of her in marriage as ſoon as the young gentleman, for whom ſhe was intended, arrived; and 'till then would take care to prevent her receiving the addreſſes of any other perſon. He added, that it was ſtill in her power to avoid the ill-natur'd reflections that a known reſtraint would occaſion, by voluntarily declining all invitations to appear in public company, which he wiſhed her to do; but if any applications were made to him by her acquaintance, he ſhould make no ſcruple of giving his reaſons for a refuſal, however diſadvantageous thoſe might be to her; and if theſe poſitive injunctions were once broke through, he would lock her up and let a perſon, who could be truſted, con-

continually over her. This was ſpoke with a firmneſs and reſolution ſo unuſual to him, and ſo oppoſite to his general character, that it evidently proved all oppoſition would be vain; ſhe gueſſed who was meant by a *perſon* who could be truſted, and trembled at the thought of being under the direction of ſuch a Duenna.

The point was now carried againſt her, and the only card left to play with advantage, was to ſubmit with a good grace, and by that means to preſerve a ſufficient degree of liberty to effect a determined change of this diſagreeable ſituation. She was extremely hurt at the thought of leading her father into a falſe opinion; yet, as no other means remained of eſcaping

eſcaping a ſubjection that would have been inſupportable, ſhe heſitated not to receive his orders with an apparent eaſe, and promiſed a willing obedience to his commands. The good old gentleman, who had been prepared to expect a very different reception of theſe injunctions, was much moved by this agreeable diſappointment, and glad to entertain a more favourable opinion than had been induſtriouſly inſtilled into him; his anger ſubſided, he became himſelf again, and behaved with perfect good nature. She took this opportunity of aſſuring him, that ſhe never had entertained the leaſt thought of, nor had received any addreſſes from, the perſon he had been made to believe ſhe was on the point of marry-

marrying, and would inſtantly break off all acquaintance with him; he ſeemed much pleaſed with this promiſe, and ſoon regained his uſual cheerfulneſs.—— A ſevere head ach obliges me to lay aſide the pen.— Adieu, my dear friend, may your happineſs be always equal to the ceaſeleſs wiſh of

Your moſt affectionate, &c.